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Yeltsin Greets Conference on Federation Issues

LD1502120294 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1125 GMT 15 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Lyudmila Yermakova]

[Text] Moscow February 15 TASS—The international conference "Russia's federal structure and the implementation of the principles of pluralistic democaracy, rule-of-law state and human rights" opened in Moscow on Tuesday. It has been organised with the participation of the Council of Europe.

"The problems you are to discuss assume special importance at the present stage of the formation of Russian statehood the beginning to which has been set by the adoption of the new Constitution and election of the Federal Assembly. Every condition has now been created for the stable activity of state institutions and for Russia's democratic development, harmoniously combining the interests of the Federation and its regions", Russian President Boris Yeltsin said in a message of greetings to the conference.

It is important "to complete the formation of the Federation's legislative structure, to ensure for the Federation's subjects genuine independence in dealing with matters in their jurisdiction, to adjust mechanisms of cooperation and interaction of local and central structures of power", the message says. "Stability and security in Russia and far beyond its limits largely depend on how effectively these problems are resolved in Russia. I hope Russia will be able fully to rely on the experience of democracies in coping with difficulties".

The fundamental law of the country "includes the federal model envisaging the equality of subjects," said Boris Pastukhov, Russian deputy foreign minister, presiding over the conference. However, provisions of the Constitution are yet to be filled with contents of law. "We are not going to copy the experience of European states, but we should use everything positive in it", he said.

Russia, Uzbekistan Concerned Over Afghanistan

LD1502233794 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2031 GMT 15 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Sitnikov]

[Text] United Nations February 15 TASS—A Russian-Uzbek statement adopted on February 8 by Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev and his Uzbek counterpart Saidmukhtar Saidkasymov was circulated here today as a document of the United Nations Security Council.

"The foreign ministers of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Uzbekistan confirm the principled stand of their states on non- interference in internal affairs of Afghanistan and express profound concern with a new outburst of armed confrontation there...

"They call for termination of fratricidal war in Afghanistan and insistently urge all Afghan military-political forces to abandon the stake on force methods and begin a joint search for political compromises in the name of national consolidation and reconciliation.

"The sides believe that the conflict in Afghanistan is a consequence of domestic contradictions and it threatens to security and stability in the region. They are extremely alarmed with increased tension near southern borders of the Commonwealth of Independent States... The sides intend to keep to strict neutrality and the principle of non-interference in internal affairs of Afghanistan."

Russia and Uzbekistan expressed their readiness for maximum assistance to the settlement of Afghan differences and the search for way of further Afghan development "within the framework of international efforts, on coordination with the United Nations Organization and all interested states".

Colonel Says CIS Defenses Not Yet Totally Secure

PM1402124194 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 12 Feb 94 pp 1-2

[Interview with Colonel General Viktor Samsonov, chief of the Staff for Coordinating CIS Military Cooperation, by Igor Lenskiy; place and date not given: "Colonel General Viktor Samsonov: 'CIS Security Causes Disquiet'"]

[Text] [Lenskiy] Viktor Nikolayevich, while studying your career I thought that fate could quite easily have destined not P. Grachev but you to be Russian defense minister 4 October 1993. Would you have carried out the order to storm the House of the Soviets?

[Samsonov] As an official I would not like to answer your question. As a Russian officer I would say no.

My service has not taken place in offices and on parquet floors. (You know how some officers and generals advance through the central apparatus.) I spent 10 years serving in the Transcaucasus. I remember how it all started in Sumgait in 1988 before my very eyes. I was involved in the events in Ganja. I saw our boys at the controls of the tanks confronted with a dilemma: Should they carry out orders and continue the convoy's advance? But that meant crushing women and children. (The People's Front "got busy" dragging kids out of baby buggies and putting them on the road). The order came that they must reach their objective right on schedule. Could our Russian lads, raised in school on Soviet traditions, have crushed women and children? Of course not. No one calling himself a man could have tried to force them or have ordered them to do that.

[Lenskiy] Could you please tell us the reason for the CIS Joint Armed Forces High Command being transformed into the Staff for Coordinating Military Cooperation? Does this move not indicate that the CIS heads of state and defense ministers are losing interest in common security problems?

[Samsonov] The reason for the change is that we regrettably failed to reach a common view regarding the need to preserve the unified defense area along with the unified early-warning, air defense, and space defense systems within the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States, nor did we succeed in creating Joint Armed Forces and a unified command and control system for the strategic nuclear forces. Although there was, and still is, an obvious need to do so.

Interest in problems of military security within the CIS has certainly not faded lately, indeed it has considerably increased. Late last year the number of CIS states party to the Treaty on Collective Security rose from six to nine. Now only three of the 12 CIS states—Moldova, Ukraine, and Turkmenistan—remain outside the treaty. They too have lately been showing great interest in military cooperation issues.

[Lenskiy] Did you try to stop the disintegration?

[Samsonov] Of course. When it was decided to switch to national armed forces we wanted to preserve at least the most important systems in our common interests. Let me cite a simple example. There was a common air defense system in the Central Asia region... At one time we suggested setting up the "Yug" [South] air defense system under joint command, covering the interests of Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan. The point is that the 12th Army was deployed on the territory of several republics! You had a command post was in one republic, a corps in another, a division in a third, and a regiment in a fourth. Some system that was! We suggested that it should not be broken up, because borders cannot be drawn in the air. But to no avail: It was destroyed. Now we are about to recreate it. But that is a very costly business. And it will take a very long time.

[Lenskiy] What impact have these actions had on the combat readiness of the new independent states' armies? Can they rebuff outside aggression where necessary?

[Samsonov] That is something for these states' military-political leaderships to worry about, since it was they who set up the national armed forces. They are answerable to the people. But the fact that the systems that I mentioned have been destroyed means that we cannot talks seriously about the Commonwealth as a whole or its individual members' being totally secure.

The point is that readiness to rebuff such aggression, particularly by military means, is forged in peacetime. Common operational planning of the use of coalition armed forces is carried out along with advance training and coordination of national armies for conducting joint combat operations. Command and control systems are set up as well as the main types of support and a definite infrastructure.

[Lenskiy] But, to all intents and purposes, that kind of training is not being carried out today?

[Samsonov] No, it is not. The experience of setting up Collective Peacekeeping Forces [CPF] in Tajikistan is very indicative. It took over three months to get together just one battalion apiece from Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan. And Kazakhstan's battalion has still not turned up! I do not know when we will set up groupings in case of major aggression. That should be pondered in peacetime.

[Lenskiy] What is hampering you: ambition, general confusion, objective difficulties?

[Samsonov] All of those. The current situation in the defense sphere is closely connected with economic and social decline. There can be no integration on defense questions against a backdrop of political and economic disintegration.

[Lenskiy] How are the republics fulfilling their commitments regarding funding your activity?

[Samsonov] To be frank, not a single document is being properly implemented. As for Russia's contribution, that is mainly what we are living off. We are even in its debt, since

Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Belarus are not fully meeting their commitments. They are not, of course, refusing to pay. But they are citing difficulties with the mechanism for mutual settlements.

[Lenskiy] What conclusions can be drawn from the experience of the CPF in Tajikistan?

[Samsonov] I take a positive view of these forces' activity. Thanks to the CPF, conditions have been created for peace talks and dialogue with the opposition, and their presence acted as a stabilizing factor at the last parliament session in Tajikistan, where passions hotted up at one moment. The Tajik leadership should take advantage of the favorable conditions to conduct dialogue with the opposition. There is not that much time. According to our data, the Tajik armed opposition is preparing for decisive action in the spring.

[Lenskiy] Last July we were all shocked at the number of casualties sustained by the 12th Russian Border Outpost in stopping infiltration of the Tajik-Afghan border. Government and parliamentary commissions traveled to the scene of the incident, nonetheless the public never learned who was responsible—the Defense Ministry, the Ministry of Security, or the border troops. Or perhaps it was just a tragic coincidence?

[Samsonov] I believe that the border troops leadership bears the bulk of the responsibility. Nonetheless it cannot be held entirely responsible. The border troops are greatly in need of hardware and arms, but most particularly of personnel. Many outposts, including the 12th Border Outpost, are by no means fully manned. I flew out there with a group of officers, we conducted an investigation and redeployed Defense Ministry battalions, but that is patently inadequate.... The attack on the 12th Outpost did not come as a surprise. Audacious, impudent attacks have been going on a long time. The proper response has not been forthcoming, the situation was not analyzed carefully, and steps were not taken. And any aggression has only expanded as it has not been rebuffed. That is the unfortunate lesson.

[Lenskiy] Are we insured against another tragedy?

[Samsonov] I am not certain right now. Attempts have been made, and outposts are bombarded with rocket shells and heavy machineguns several times a week. Enemy weapon positions are immediately suppressed by helicopter attack, artillery and mortar fire. However, our combat readiness and reactions continue to be tested and probed.

[Lenskiy] Following the breakup of the USSR the length of Russia's borders to be guarded (compared with the Union) dropped by a factor of 1.5. Why have the liberated hardware and arms not been operationally redeployed to the most dangerous part of the border, Tajikistan?

[Samsonov] Nothing has been liberated! It has all been "privatized" by the new independent states. In a not entirely civilized manner, to put it mildly. The principle employed was that everything on my republic's territory is "mine"! There was no discussion as to whether it was needed or not, whether there was an adequate supply or a surplus over requirements, and it was impossible to reach agreement. In the Transcaucasus, for instance, special technical equipment from the security strips was barbarically destroyed. The argument was as follows: Why have the border guards got so much land, when our sheep have nowhere to graze?

[Lenskiy] The commander of the border troops claims that 13,000 km of border are open today.

[Samsonov] We have not even determined where to have a border, with whom, and what kind of border it should be. For instance, Azerbaijan effectively has no border with Iran and no one knows who is to guard it. Russia too has no border with Azerbaijan. In the proper meaning of the word.

[Lenskiy] What new opportunities do you see for settling local conflicts within the CIS (Karabakh, Abkhazia) in connection with Azerbaijan and Georgia's joining the Commonwealth?

[Samsonov] I think that the admission of Azerbaijan and Georgia to the collective security system will create favorable opportunities for these conflicts to be resolved by political means. Real conditions have emerged for groups of military observers and CPF troops to be used to localize and put a stop to conflict. Everything, or virtually everything, now depends on the good will of the political leadership in these states. We would remind you that peacekeeping forces have played their part in the Dniester Region and South Ossetia.

[Lenskiy] But the conflicting sides must mutually agree in order for this to occur. At the moment the only signs of that are in Abkhazia. Karabakh is another matter. Azerbaijan has, on the contrary, been observed to step up hostilities since the Ashgabat meeting.

[Samsonov] You were absolutely right to say that there must first be mutual agreement for a cease-fire. If that is secured, military observers can "maintain" the situation, prevent it from breaking away.... A political solution has to be found. At one time I thought that leaders had already had enough of war—both peoples have suffered a great deal. But it turns out that I was mistaken. Someone thinks that the fighting must go on.

[Lenskiy] There are reports that foreign mercenaries are involved on both sides in the Karabakh war. There are increasingly frequent references to Afghan mojahedin.

[Samsonov] There is a lot of talk like that. I was told about this during an emergency meeting with the states' representatives—the deputy chiefs of staff. I said: Show me just one prisoner of war on television who is a citizen of Afghanistan, Iran, or Pakistan. They are unable to do so! There is talk, but no facts.

[Lenskiy] On the other hand we have clearly seen Russian boys who have been fighting on either the Armenian or the Azerbaijani side and have then been captured. How do you regard that?

[Samsonov] There are only a handful of these mercenaries. However, that is the cost of the processes that occur during the breakup of a great empire. Who thought about the guys who were left on the territory of a particular republic regardless of what they wanted? They had one homeland—the Soviet Union—and it sent them to serve in Armenia or Azerbaijan. Overnight (there was no period of transition) these boys found themselves without a place to serve, without an apartment, without any certainty.

No one was asked who wanted to swear another oath and who did not. No, they just had people shouting at them: All you Ukrainians and Belarusians, go back home to your own country. They did so. But there are no jobs. For instance, 100 engineers are needed, but 200 turn up. "But we don't need 200." Where are they to go? They will no longer be welcomed at their former post in Russia—they have been crossed off the unit's rolls. They are told: Take discharge. These people have ended up wanted by no one.

We now have servicemen in Central Asia, for instance, who do not know to whom they belong. They have no status. They are not being given dual citizenship. Some would like to continue their service, but they are told: Take local citizenship. "I don't want to." "No? Get lost." Many problems would be settled if the parties to the Treaty on Collective Security signed an agreement on dual citizenship.

[Lenskiy] Won't the Baltic states' involvement in the NATO "Partnership for Peace" military program threaten the security of the Commonwealth?

[Samsonov] That is not an easy question. There must be an in-depth investigation into the real idea behind this program.

At first glance the NATO plan, as it is being presented to the Western public, does not aim to pose additional dangers to anyone.

However, the fact that this document emerged shortly after the North Atlantic alliance's official decision not to expand the bloc by admitting new members does cause some concern. This decision was adopted under pressure from the world and European public, as well as owing to Russia's tough stance. There is doubt as to whether the new program constitutes a veiled means of expanding NATO, establishing its strategic influence in East Europe, and bringing the bloc's front lines right up to Russia's western borders.

If that is the case, this move could upset the balance of forces in Europe as enshrined in the CFE Treaty—which is unacceptable to us.

[Lenskiy] However, NATO does not cease to assure us of its peaceableness....

[Samsonov] As if we had been friends for ever and ever. But then the commander in chief of the NATO southern theater travels to Greece and Turkey. To what end, do you think?

[Lenskiy] Probably to reduce their military presence.

[Samsonov] If only! He went to strengthen NATO's southern flank. That is the point. But you were saying about the Baltic....

[Lenskiy] Do you believe in the future of a single security system in Europe with NATO and Russia under the same "umbrella"?

[Samsonov] Not right now. Only in the very long term. Judging by the statements and the arguments it all looks OK in theory. But not in practice. Our national interests are confined to Russia's borders or, in the last resort, to the territories of the CIS republics. But U.S. national interests are increasingly focusing on Europe, East Europe even, and Asia. Recent statements indicate that U.S. interests must be present worldwide! Once again something does not somehow gel here....

[Lenskiy] Will you be making additional efforts to secure UN or CSCE status for the CIS states' peacekeeping forces? Is that necessary?

[Samsonov] Tackling these issues is not part of the Staff's functions. The Collective Security Council or the Council of Commonwealth Heads of State will probably tackle them. As for whether it is necessary, I think it is. After all, a UN mandate does not only relieve a state of possible accusations of expansionist policy but also considerably reduces the burden of its material expenditure on a peacekeeping operation, lends it an international character, and gives its mission UN or CSCE prestige.

[Lenskiy] How do you regard the prospect of Russian military bases being set up on the territory of certain other CIS countries (Baykonur, for instance)?

[Samsonov] If the Commonwealth countries reach a mutual agreement with Russia on the siting of such military bases, I take a positive view of this. By and large they are elements in the Commonwealth's common defense area. This step does nothing but strengthen CIS stability and security.

[Lenskiy] From time to time reports appear regarding your Staff's difficult—to put it mildly—relations with the Russian Federation Defense Ministry. What can you say about that?

[Samsonov] You know, there can never be easy relationships during a period of reorganization, when major reforms are being implemented and new approaches and views of those issues are being formulated.

Time will tell who is right and who is less so.

It is a fact that it has become easier lately to work, cooperate, and find mutually acceptable compromise solutions.

Views Military Cooperation Trends

PM1402151194 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Feb 94 First Edition p 6

[Interview with Colonel General Viktor Samsonov, chief of Staff for Coordinating CIS Military Cooperation, by

Vyacheslav Kocherov under "Nearby Foreign Parts" rubric; place and date not given: "Sound the Signal To Assemble, Army Buglers!"]

[Text] As Colonel General Viktor Samsonov, chief of the Staff for Coordinating CIS Military Cooperation, declared in conversation with our correspondent, the creation of joint armed forces is a matter for the not so distant future.

[Kocherov] Viktor Nikolayevich, if everything really is moving toward the creation of the CIS JAF [Joint Armed Forces], how are to we understand the transformation of the CIS JAF High Command into the Staff for Coordinating Military Cooperation? Can this be considered a step forward in the development of military cooperation?

[Samsonov] Paradoxical though this may seem, at the present moment this really is so, although just two years ago the path toward military cooperation seemed quite different to all of us. The creation of the CIS JAF High Command in March 1992 was a consequence of reckoning on preserving a unified defense area and joint leadership of the General-Purpose Forces and of the systems of air defense, missile attack early warning, ABM defense, verification of strategic forces and weapons of mass destruction, etc. But life, as is known, has ordered things in its own way.

Military organizational development in the Commonwealth states took the path of creating national armies. By July 1992 it was already clear that it would not be possible to create the General Purpose Forces. The post of commander of these forces was abolished. The process of disuniting the air defense, missile attack early warning, and ABM defense systems began in the first half of 1993. Elements of these systems were scattered about the territories of different, now sovereign CIS states and had, in point of fact, been "privatized" by them—which led virtually to their destruction.

Then Russia's military-political leadership assumed the functions of managing the Strategic Forces. The High Command's sphere of managerial activity was shrinking like shagreen leather. Therefore in August 1993 the CIS Defense Ministers Council adopted the decision to reorganize the High Command into the Staff for Coordinating Military Cooperation, which was implemented at the meeting of heads of state in Ashgabat 24 December last year.

Of course, we would all like very much to preserve the common defense area and its administration, unified defense systems and infrastructure, joint armed forces, and the common "nuclear umbrella" over the CIS, but.... None of this exists yet (or already). Not that anybody objects to coordination in the military sphere. Therefore, if we evaluate from these positions the transformation of the CIS JAF High Command into the Staff for Coordinating Military Cooperation, this is a natural phenomenon. But it can hardly be considered a positive fact that we failed to preserve the common defense area and to create joint armed forces. Nevertheless, I am firmly confident that the creation of such armed forces is a matter for the not so distant future.

[Kocherov] You have not spoken of another aspect of this problem—the legislative basis on which the policy of military cooperation was founded. Or are the documents so universal that they easily fit in with the newly created structure of the Staff for Coordinating Military Cooperation?

[Samsonov] If only this were so. The High Command has spent two years working out approximately 100 documents on questions of defense. The role of the CIS JAF High Command found its place in such basic documents as the Commonwealth Charter and the Collective Security Treaty. Now this entire legislative base has to be revised—which will take, according to the most modest estimates, at least two years, because no more than two military questions are being submitted to the Heads of State Council. Meanwhile new agreements are waiting in line, whose signing also brooks no delay.

[Kocherov] In the press today there are many contradictory reports about the Collective Peacemaking Force [CPF], which most frequently appears in the guise only of Russia's 201st Motorized Rifle Division. What is the composition of the CPF?

[Samsonov] The agreement on the CPF and the decision on forming the CPF, signed by the heads of five CIS states—Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan—prescribed that the CPF be formed by 1 October 1993 and that its arrival at its points of stationing on Tajik territory be ensured. Russia allocated the 201st Motorized Rifle Division and certain other units to make up the CPF. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan pledged to send subunits there, up to the strength of one motorized rifle battalion each. Since the 201st Motorized Rifle Division has long been in Tajikistan, the question of manning it and of its timely arrival on station did not arise.

Things were more complex with the allocation of subunits of the remaining countries for the CPF. This was all time lost. This is what it cost: four attacks on border posts and instances of hostage taking. This constituted moral, material, and political damage to both Russia and the CIS states, not to mention the threat to stability in the republics neighboring on Tajikistan.

In addition to the Russian troops, the CPF is now made up of a reinforced motorized rifle battalion of the Uzbek Armed Forces, an incomplete battalion of the Kyrgyz Armed Forces, and units of the Tajik Armed Forces.

[Kocherov] Nevertheless, how do you rate the position of our troops in Tajikistan? Are you sure that they will not find themselves drawn into another war on foreign territory?

[Samsonov] I would rate as stable the position of the CIS troops in Tajikistan as a whole and of the Russian troops in particular. They are successfully fulfilling the tasks entrusted to them, creating favorable conditions for the political settlement of crisis processes, and ensuring the covering of the Tajik-Afghan border.

With regard to forecasts, I would say that the CPF in itself cannot resolve all Tajik problems. It is merely creating conditions for reconciling the sides, reaching political accord between the Tajik Government and the opposition, and resolving the border question with Afghanistan.

Some people believe that Tajikistan can manage without the Commonwealth's military forces. I do not think so. The troops' withdrawal from there will not only not ease tension but will also lead to a new flareup of violence and the exacerbation of border problems. Therefore, however hard and costly it might be to maintain the CIS CPF, it is essential to the Commonwealth and, in particular, to Tajikistan.

Incidentally, a session of the republic Supreme Council was held in Tajikistan recently, during which a number of awkward problems were resolved and representatives of irreconcilable groupings were made to agree to compromises. Hope emerged of creating a coalition government. The very presence of the CPF played a stabilizing role here.

[Kocherov] What is the nature of the relationship between the Staff for Coordinating Military Cooperation and the Ministries of Defense of those states which are not in the collective security system?

[Samsonov] We cannot yet speak of any system of relations, since the staff was only created one month ago. But it is possible to speak of trends. The chief one is the interest which Moldova, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine are showing in military cooperation in very diverse spheres: from the military-technical sphere to the training of military cadres.

I would particularly like to point to the substantial change in the views of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry leadership on participation in the collective resolution of defense questions. Addressing the Ashgabat session of the Commonwealth Defense Ministers Council, Army General Vitaliy Hryhorovych Radetskyy, Ukrainian minister of defense, particularly emphasized that, in addition to developing bilateral interstate relations in the military sphere, the republic's leadership is examining the question of the Ukrainian Defense Ministry's joining the CIS Defense Ministers Council.

This, in my estimation, is a substantial step forward in strengthening the Commonwealth's collective security, which confirms the general integrational sentiments in the former republics of the USSR.

A year ago people in Azerbaijan, for example, did not wish even to speak of any cooperation in the defense sphere. But today we are awaiting a representative of that republic's armed forces in the staff. Incidentally, this republic was the ninth to sign the Collective Security Treaty. I believe it will not be the last.

[Kocherov] Based on this, what is your forecast for the future of military cooperation in the CIS?

[Samsonov] To be brief, things will, in my opinion, evolve as follows—from the coordination of military cooperation to a military-political alliance and the creation of joint armed forces. I will refrain at present from speaking about the schedule for carrying out this trend. I am convinced of one thing—along with economic integration and the strengthening of political cooperation, questions of restoring the common defense area and creating joint armed forces will also be resolved. The CPF is the first step on this path.

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 15 Feb

LD1502072694 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0608 GMT 15 Feb 94

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA on the Crimean president's talks with Russian leaders:

"Yuriy Meshkov had something to be at a loss: he was urged to bring about political stability in the Crimea... Meanwhile, the president of the Crimea knows better than anyone else that political stability on the peninsula depends not on Simferopol—the key to stability is in other capitals.

"In Kiev and Moscow, Meshkov was referred to as a hostage of political stability, who would be easy to blame in the event of any exacerbation of the Crimean issue.

"It is no wonder that the Crimean president who is now rooted to the Crimean corridors of power, looks for new hostages among Moscow politicians, not among little-known Simferopol officials: yet another sensation marking Meshkov's visit was his proposal to Yevgeniy Saburov, who, it would seem, was irrevocably pushed away from real economic power, to head a Crimean government".

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA carries an interview with Yevgeniy Saburov. "It is precisely representatives from Ukraine, who constitute the flower of Russian economic science. Yavlinskiy is from Lvov, Yasin from Odessa, Belkin from Kharkov," Saburov said.

"Moscow has been all the time replenished wth cadres from the provinces... I return to the Crimea with the sole aim—to promote economic reforms on the peninsula. Its potential has not been used to the full so far... It is too early to speak about a specific programme. It is necessary to cast a more attentive look around on the spot".

KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA runs a sensational item, in which it is asserted that Georgian ex-President Zviad Gamsakhurdia "is alive and will soon place himself at the head of a Georgian government-in- exile in a foreign country. This was stated in a rather categorical form by a Georgian Zviadista delegation who paid an unofficial visit to Stavropol, to their sympathisers, Russian nationalists, and the Georgian diaspora".

KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (RED STAR) on the fifth anniversary of the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and on the consequences of that war for Russian society:

"The main thing is to show care for Afghan war veterans—commissioned and non-commissioned officers—for them

to remain on active duty and form the backbone of a new professional army, to draw on the combat experience as the basis of the training of troops, and to protect the people socially and morally".

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on rumours about change in banknote denomination and the rouble rate:

"The rumours that the denomination of banknotes is expected to be changed and the rouble rate is expected to be set in a one-to-one ratio against the U.S. dollar are a sheer invention".

The newspaper quotes Aleksandr Khandruyev, deputy chairman of the Central Bank of Russia, as saying that he believes that "the question of a change in banknote denomination is usually raised only after prices in a country stabilise."

RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA carries an interview with Yuriy Shafranik, Russian minister of fuel and power, who emphasises that "notwithstanding the overall slump in the Russian industry by 16-17 percent on average, our fuel-producing sectors operated in a relatively steady way. Oil production decreased by only 12 percent, that of coal by nine percent, gas by three percent, and the generation of electric power by six percent, thereby ensuring a sufficiently stable provision of the national economy with energy resources".

SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA runs an an article by Yegor Ligachev, former Politburo member of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee, who writes: "The work of the parties that are members of the Communist Parties' Union—CPSU is as if a continuation of the CPSU activities but proceeds under new conditions. This must be taken into account. Previously the party set itself as a task to broaden the social and political rights of citizens, whereas now the point is to restore them".

PRAVDA carries a Russian Communist Party statement, which reads as follows:

"One has to state with deep regret that a campaign to destroy monuments of Russian and Soviet history and culture was launched on a large scale in the country in recent years. Monuments are pulled down and destroyed, the names of towns, streets, and squares are changed, and museums are closed down. Matters went to such lengths that the study of the creative legacy of a number of great Russian writers has been removed from school programmes, and the study of the country's recent history has been narrowed unbelievably".

Press Review for 16 Feb

LD1602112294 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0607 GMT 16 Feb 94

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow February 16 TASS—Moscow-based newspapers highlight the Russian-British summit meeting. The press points out that the Tuesday signing of a joint Russian-British statement on the de-targeting of strategic nuclear missiles from each other became the chief result of the Moscow talks between President Boris Yeltsin and British Prime Minister John Major, who had arrived in Russia for his first official visit here.

Newspapers practically with one accord note the friendly partnership atmosphere of the talks, although, as NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA points out in particular, "There were complex issues under discussion, such as the situation in Bosnia."

Commenting on the Russian-British talks, TRUD points out that "Russia and Britain are not adversaries any longer". KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (Red Star), describing the talks as a "dialogue of partners", writes: "it is important that our mutually respectful dialogue between equal partners is carried on. And not only with the United States but also with European countries that are friendly to Russia, with Britain rightfully among them".

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI, recalling the words of President Yeltsin that Russia and Britain have now developed the best-ever relations in their entire history, emphasises that "this conclusion has been backed up by a package of joint documents".

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA on the signing of a bilateral Russo-Tatar treaty in the Kremlin on Tuesday as a result of talks between Presidents Boris Yeltsin and Mintimer Shaimiyev:

"The presidents of Russia and Tatarstan summed up the results of the three-year negotiating process between Moscow and Kazan. From now on, the Republic of Tatarstan is a state united with the Russian Federation on the basis of two constitutions and the treaty on the delimitation of the areas of jurisdiction and mutual delegating of powers between the state power bodies of the Russian Federation and Tatarstan.

NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA runs an interview with Shaimiyev, who recalled in particular that he had stated way back in January this year that Tatarstan "will sign a treaty with Russia before the beginning of March".

ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI on the signing of the Russia-Tatarstan treaty:

"An ossified centre is being replaced by a federal authority, the power of which is in the emancipation of the subjects of the federation". At the same time the newspaper points out that, for a variety of reasons, primarily socio-economic ones, Russia and Tatarstan" are just destined to be partners".

The newspaper ROSSIYA, under the rubric "a political portrait", carries an article about Ivan Rybkin, chairman of the fifth state Duma in Russian history.

ROSSIYA runs excerpts from a speech made by Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov at the congress dealing with "the reality and economic development prospects".

The newspaper notes "a critical tenor of the speech made by the mayor who, perhaps, for the first time unambiguously stated his disagreement with the way economic reforms are being carried out in Russia...Luzhkov in point of fact read out his own reform programme which differs from the government one".

At the same time ROSSIYA states that the mayor strongly criticised the privatisation policy being pursued under the guidance of russian state property committee chief Anatoliy Chubays, pointing out that "this privatisation is ruining the economy".

Yeltsin on Participation in Bosnia Solution

LD1502174194 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1628 GMT 15 Feb 94

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature: Reports by Diplomatic Correspondents Dmitry Voskoboinikov, Igor Porshnev, Vitaliy Trubetskoy and others]

[Text] If "somebody tries to resolve issues concerning Bosnia without Russia's participation, we shall not let it happen." This statement was made in Moscow on Tuesday by President Boris Yeltsin after signing a number of British-Russian documents.

In answer to a question from Interfax's correspondent the Russian leader said that his partner in the talks—Prime Minister John Major—shares Moscow's view that it's essential "to transfer the military hardware surrounding Sarajevo to the U.N. forces, and compel the warring Bosnian sides "to settle their conflict peacefully" by means of talks.

Yeltsin confirmed however that the organizers of the possible attacks on the contingent of U.N. peace-keepers should be "punished."

Earlier on Tuesday the president's press secretary, Vyacheslav Kostikov, said that the possible "NATO air strikes on Serb positions would be inevitably associated in the eyes of international and Russian public opinion with the USA and with the recently proclaimed "Partnership for Peace" program.

"In my view this may do psychological damage to that diplomatic initiative," he stressed in an interview with Interfax.

"The world has not fully grasped the concept of that program yet," Kostikov said. "Many people may consider the bombing of Serb positions by NATO forces, in which the USA plays the leading role, as reflecting the ideology of "Partnership for Peace" in concrete terms. Since such turn of events is quite possible, the proposed operation may be viewed as a false start of the American initiative."

In his view, the president's press secretary pointed out, to resolve the Bosnian conflict politically would be in the interests of both the USA and Russia.

In the meantime the State Duma's committee on geopolitics conducted hearings on Tuesday and decided that the international public must not interfere in the affairs of former Yugoslav republics.

Deputies issued a resolution which calls for restoring "a unified democratic state" in the territory of former Yugoslavia. According to them, this is the only way to stop the bloodshed.

According to the resolution, the practical implementation of NATO's decision to bomb Serb positions around Sarajevo "should be viewed as an act of international terrorism". The document suggests that the Russian president should "use the right to veto in the U.N. security Council in regard to air strikes in former Yugoslavia, and resolve the issue of lifting by Russia economic sanctions imposed against Yugoslavia".

These decisions were not affected when a spokesman for Russia's Foreign Ministry, Vladimir Ivanovsky, addressed those present. He tried to explain that the U.N. resolution concerning former Yugoslavia lays responsibility for breaking the siege of Sarajevo on the U.N. secretary-general, and that in fact there is no need to convene the U.N. security Council for taking a decision on the use of aircraft. Under the circumstances the possibility of Russia's using the right to veto is purely "hypothetical", the diplomat said.

Churkin in Zagreb, Comments on NATO Decision

LD1502194794 Zagreb HTV Television in Serbo-Croatian 1830 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] The Russian president's special envoy Vitaliy Churkin tonight arrived in Zagreb where he talked to the press following his one-day visit to Sarajevo. Churkin described his visit to Sarajevo as very encouraging. All three sides are contemplating peace rather than a continuation of conflicts, the Russian envoy maintains. Asked by a reporter about his view on possible attacks by NATO on positions of Bosnian Serbs around Sarajevo, Churkin said:

[Begin recording of Churkin, in English with superimposed Serbo-Croatian translation] Let me explain my attitude. I am not speaking as a private individual but as a Russian official. First, regardless of what they are telling us, I believe that NATO's decision goes beyond what the UN Security Council resolutions stipulate. We should have taken it to the UN Security Council and then we would have total unanimity in the international community's stands. This was feasible since basically we are talking about the same views. We would have the UN Security Council's authority behind us. I believe that this method would have been far better. [end recording]

Notes Progress in Settlement

LD1602110194 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0955 GMT 16 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Zagreb February 16 TASS—"Problems linked with the normalisation of the situation around Sarajevo are extremely difficult. They call for serious efforts by all the sides involved, but some progress is already showing up. The sides involved in the conflict are beginning to think more in terms of peace and not military confrontation," special envoy of the Russian president, Deputy Foreign Minister Vitaliy Churkin told a press conference here on Thursday [as received] after his trip to Sarajevo.

While in the Bosnian capital, Churkin met leaders of the Muslim community and commanders of the Bosnian Serb army, as well as representatives of the command of the U.N. Forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Russian special envoy said that the U.N. Forces were successfully

establishing control over the heavy armaments of the conflicting sides, emplaced around Sarajevo. "It is difficult to say for sure that this process will be completed within 2-3 days," Churkin noted, "but the actions of the sides are reassuring."

The Russian diplomat again stressed the immutabilty of Russia's stand. He said that NATO air strikes at positions of the Bosnian Serbs could be considered only as an extreme measure, permissible in an emergency situation. "In any case," he stressed, "it is necessary to realise that this step will escalate the Bosnian conflict."

Touching on the possibility of a Russian military contingent taking part in the NATO-planned operation, Churkin noted that there was no reason for this. He does not think it possible that Russian soldiers could be sent to an area, where their lives and safety will be in danger, as a result of a decision adopted without Russia's participation.

The special envoy of the Russian president will arrive in Belgrade from Zagreb today.

West's Approach to Bosnia Solution Viewed

FM1502123194 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 15 Feb 94 p 3

[Article by Sergey Sidorov: "Intervention or Death! This Is the Price at Which the Sarajevo Authorities Are Trying To Provoke Foreign Interference"]

[Text] Do you remember the Sidney Lumet and Henry Fonda movie "Twelve Angry Men"? A youth accused of murder is in the dock. The jury must bring in a verdict of "guilty" or "not guilty"—a unanimous verdict, moreover. Otherwise, according to the law, the jury will have to reconsider the case until they all, to a man, reach the same conclusion.

The jury member played by Fonda voted against a conviction and...found himself alone. By the end of the movie, at the cost of an incredible effort, he succeeds in changing the jury's mind. A "guilty" verdict proves groundless—it is based on questionable evidence and is passed by jurors who treated the accused either with indifference or with prejudice. When doubt is interpreted in the accused's favor, this does not mean that any court is taking his side in advance. It is the democratic norm. So we had only to publish an item on the UN experts' report which did not fit in with the version about the Bosnian Serbs' involvement in the blast for the West at once to assign KRASNAYA ZVEZDA to the "pro-Serbian camp." One Russian newspaper called our article on this subject "provocative."

Right from the start of the Yugoslav conflict KRASNAYA ZVEZDA has not aimed to please anyone or win plaudits. We have always been interested only in the real situation and the conclusions to be drawn from it. This is the usual approach among the military. So it is unscrupulous, to say the least, to interpret our desire for objectivity as a manifestation of "pro-Serbian" (London's THE TIMES) sentiments or, equally, of "pro-Muslim" or "pro-Croatian" sentiments in the Russian Army. In our analysis we rely only on facts or on assessments by professionals. For example, we basically share the assessment of British General Michael Rose, commander of the "blue helmets" in Bosnia, who recently said in a BBC interview: "It is surprising that the (Muslim) formations which have refused to submit are trying to sabotage the cease-fire agreement (reached on the day the NATO ultimatum was put to the Bosnian Serbs—S.S.) and thus prolong the suffering of their people in Sarajevo." Only, unlike Gen. Rose, we assert that it is not a matter of "formations which have refused to submit." It has, all along, been the tactic of the present leadership of the Bosnian Muslims to provoke military intervention from outside.

This conclusion is not unfounded and is based certainly not on "reports by the Serbian TANJUG state agency" but on long-standing observations and repeated personal conversations with Muslim and Serbian leaders in Sarajevo as well as with representatives of the UN forces in the Bosnian capital." [quotation marks as published] As an argument we publish for the first time a highly eloquent document with minor abridgments. It is the text of a report by Canadian Gen. Lewis Mackenzie, first commander of the UN force's Sarajevo sector, to Marrack Goulding, UN under secretary general for peacekeeping operations. The document is dated 14 July 1992.

"1. The situation in Sarajevo is continuing to deteriorate despite the arrival of humanitarian aid and its distribution in blockaded regions. We are keeping the airport open at the cost of an almost unacceptable degree of risk. Everything could collapse overnight.

"2. The UN force is being subjected to a slander campaign by the (Muslim) Presidency. But their leaders, including the president (Izetbegovic), deny this. Meanwhile the campaign of persecution is highly effective. The attitude of people on the Presidency's side to us is extremely negative. There have already been several incidents directed against our officers and men while they were discharging their official duties.

"3. My conversation yesterday convinced me once and for all that the president will agree only to military intervention or death for 'his' people as a final solution (his words). Over the past few days many opportunities for talks have presented themselves, which he rejected. He also rejected proposals from functionaries of his party, the SDA (Footnote) (Party of Democratic Action), wanting to meet with the Serbs. The necessary preparations had been made, but the president decided not to approve a meeting until there was a cease-fire throughout Bosnia-Herzegovina. My attempts to persuade him to meet with the opposing side at a working level, in order to discuss the details of demilitarizing the Dobrinja region, came up against a solid wall. He made it clear that, if the international community is not prepared to intervene, then he is prepared to 'die twice' rather than have dealings with an 'aggressor.'

"The situation in Sarajevo points to the Presidency's desire to maintain the current crisis. The majority of the Serbian

guns are silent, although the Serbs are not free of accusations either. As for the Presidency, they are continuing to provoke exchanges of fire in an attempt to improve their tactical position. It is rather difficult to prove this, although a trend can definitely be traced.

"Shelling in Sarajevo is now considerably less frequent, although the Presidency is continuing to exploit the myth that shells are being lobbed into the city. This does not tally with reality but is a version published by someone who expects foreign military aid.

"On the other hand, the Serbs propose that we station 'blue helmets' at all their positions, right down to the smallest subunit. This is an attractive idea, but I do not possess adequate resources or the mandate.

"The situation will probably deteriorate unless military intervention is undertaken. I personally, however, consider such a step impractical. Disappointed as a result of unrealized expectations, the Presidency's forces will continue attacking the 'blue helmets' in an attempt to portray matters as though the Serbs are to blame. The artillery shelling of the headquarters building last night, which could be repeated, was probably carried out from the Presidency side's positions. I am most anxious for the military observers in the regions of concentration of heavy arms. They are isolated and are virtually sitting targets.... I believe that the time for tough decisions has come. For obvious reasons they cannot be adopted here. With best wishes, Mackenzie."

So, how did the Sarajevo leadership's tactic turn out for the Bosnian Muslims themselves? The hopes of military intervention were drawing now nearer, now more remote, but people were still dying. Ethnic cleansing was continuing, and numbers of both Muslims and Serbs, who were inconvenient to the West, were falling. But the Muslims remain the side which has suffered most. The number of dead among them long ago topped the 300,000 mark.

As for the role of the mass media in this whole game, this is a separate topic. Probably never before in the history of conflicts has Joe Public been subjected to so many lies and so much disinformation. Following the television reports of the "Serbian shelling" of a bread line in the Old Town, the UN Security Council met and announced sanctions against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It later came to light that the people had died as the result of a mine laid by Muslim extremists. London newspapers reprinted a UN experts' report on this, and the anti-Serbian campaign eased off a little. Then the emaciated figures of "prisoners of Serbian camps" appeared on the television screen. But, following inoculation with another dose of hatred, it came to light that the shots had been falsified, etc.

Suffice it to say of the role of official European diplomacy only that an ethnic war on an unprecedented scale in Bosnia-Herzegovina had been predicted 100 percent by experts in the event of a recognition of Bosnia's independence before all the contradictions had been resolved around the negotiating table. Bosnia's second-largest—the Serbs—disagreed categorically with secession from Yugoslavia. The majority of the Muslim population then was also in favor of a peaceful path. It was international recognition of Bosnia that gave the original boost precisely to the "party of war" headed by Izetbegovic. Now the moderate politician Fikret Abdic, who won 300,000 more votes than Izetbegovic in the prewar election precisely on a platform of interethnic concord, has been forced to fight Izetbegovic's gunmen for the right to conclude a peace with the Serbs and Croats. Meanwhile the prospects for peace in Bosnia remain hazy.

Of course we should agree with French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe. After all, the most important thing is not to ascertain who was to blame for the recent tragedy in the Sarajevo market; the important thing is that people should no longer suffer shelling. But, as experience shows, to strive for that by increasing pressure on one of the warring sides and, still more so, by putting an ultimatum to it means playing into the hands of extremist forces among the Bosnian Muslims and pouring oil on the flames of the Bosnia conflict.

Yeltsin 'Highly Appreciates' Ties With UK

LD1502184594 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1651 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] President Boris Yeltsin has assured Premier John Major that Russia highly appreciates kind and trustful relations with Great Britain. Speaking at an official lunch in the Kremlin in honor of the British premier on Tuesday [15 February], the Russian president stressed John Major's sincere attention to what happens in Russia, his real and concrete support of democratic reforms in the country.

Yeltsin indicated that Russia moves along this path not easily, like all countries which have already passed it. "But the most important thing is that a reliable foundation, the Constitution, has been laid beneath the reform building," Yeltsin said.

President Yeltsin expressed satisfaction with the talks in Moscow and the signed documents, noting that every meeting with John Major brings "something new and significant in relations between the two countries, brings them closer to each other and enriches their cooperation."

Boris Yeltsin pointed out that Russia and Great Britain share common goals and values—to do everything possible so that people live in a safer and more prosperous world, be free and not worried about the fate of their children and grandchildren.

"Our approaches are not completely the same," the president said. "And naturally it is in common interests to find a correct and painless way toward reaching this great and noble goal." He said this is one of the most important guidelines of the Russian-British cooperation.

Major Grants Interview

LD1502225694 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1857 GMT 15 Feb 94

["Exclusive" interview with British Prime Minister John Major by unidentified correspondent in Moscow on 15 February; Major and unidentified correspondent speak in English with superimposed Russian translation—recorded]

[Text] Esteemed viewers, as you know British Prime Minister John Major is in our country on an official visit. Now we offer for your attention an exclusive interview which the high-ranking guest gave to the Russian television.

[Correspondent] Mr. Prime Minister, there are different symbols and stereotypes: good and bad; a red star, a matreshka doll, rockets. For a long time they were the stereotypes of our country. What image of Russia do you have now?

[Major] I believe that many of the stereotypes you have just mentioned have given way to new realities and a new understanding. This morning President Yeltsin said that relations between Russia and the United Kingdom today are better than they had been in past decades. The main reason for this is that they have become closer. We know more about one another. Trade between our countries is developing, political contacts are expanding, and visits of top officials are becoming more frequent. The British now have a better understanding of what is going on in Russia, and the Russians have a better understanding of what Britain supports.

[Correspondent] What are the current potential areas of disagreement? Can you predict some of them at all? In general, we have a good idea as to where our positions are close and opinions coincide, but it is no less important to know where they do not coincide and how to overcome them.

[Major] I will be straightforward. Today in the course of the talks we were unable to identify many disagreements. But we discovered many areas where we coincide. For example, we actively support your reforms. They are rather painful, we know that. They are difficult. It is not easy to make the transition from the type of system you used to have to a free market system, but when the transition is completed, major advantages are revealed. At some point in time Russia's citizens saw that transformations were occurring in the old system, but the price of change entails difficulties, and the Russian people are carrying difficulties on their shoulders.

It is a time of heavy burdens and a time of change, but at the moment the advantages which will be revealed later—they will not fail to be revealed—are not very apparent to people, because people live for today. That is why the main thing is accord and support for bold actions. As we are in a position to help, we would like to do so.

[Correspondent] Disagreements and a divergence of views still exist, they exist here and there, but they exist. Where do you think they are apparent?

[Major] Really, there are not many such areas. Now, in bilateral relations between Russian and the United Kingdom the number of such disagreements is very small. Where there are some, we try to eliminate them. It is an amazing fact that only four and five and, even more so, seven and eight years ago, one could state numerous disagreements between our countries, and nowadays they are hard to find. What can be found straight away is accord. Coincidence of views on the issue of the reforms, agreement on Russia's joining the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and on Russia's joining the European Council, agreement regarding ways to bring an end to the bloodshed in Bosnia and, finally, the agreement, which we signed officially today, on not targeting Russian nuclear weapons on Great Britain. Our nuclear weapons will not be targeted against Russia. We have achieved a great deal of accord.

[Correspondent] Mr. Prime Minister, in what areas of cooperation can you suggest a greater breakthrough was made and what prospects are most favorable?

[Major] I think that we reached great understanding in the economic sphere. There is every possibility of increasing the volumes of trade. At present out trade aircraft has just taken off, it is still touching the ground and has not yet gained any height. The potential for increasing mutual trade is immense. The potential for increasing capital investments is equally great. What is good for Russia will also be good for Great Britain. I think that as the reforms progress, Russia's attractiveness for foreign investors will increase sharply as stability increases. Then trade turnover with western countries, and with Great Britain in particular, will increase as a whole.

[Correspondent] Mr. Prime Minister, would you please say a few words directly to Russian television viewers.

[Major] We have watched with great admiration from afar how in the past four-five years Russia has been carrying out amazing political reforms—difficult reforms, complex ones. Five years ago the British people could not imagine that your country would have a publicly elected president, a new constitution, and a democratically elected parliament, whose work can be followed on television. Very few people could imagine the considerable economic transformations which are taking place in your country.

These transformations include a great degree of price liberalization, an immense scale of privatization and, finally, the determination with which you are advancing toward a free market. Of course, this needs time, and this cannot be achieved without hard work, sweat, and pain, but I see that Russia and Russia's citizens are full of determination to advance in this direction and we support you in this.

Major on Developing Relations

LD1502223494 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 2100 GMT 15 Feb 94

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] [Correspondent] Prime Minister John Major has spoken highly of the results of his visit to Moscow and his talks with President Yeltsin and Prime Minister Chernomyrdin. Asked what he thinks of the prospects for future development of the relationship between the two countries, John Major said:

[Begin recording] [Major, in English with superimposed Russian translation] I think it will continue to develop further. I have invited President Yeltsin to come to Britain again this year on a reciprocal visit. I have also invited the prime minister. I hope they will come. We are now opening doors to political cooperation. We should also be opening doors to economic relations even wider. We have enormous opportunities here. First of all, it is necessary to increase trade and mutual investments—this will be beneficial for Russia as well as for Britain. [end recording]

[Correspondent] The British premier has also spoken highly about the progress of Russian reforms. He noted that, in his opinion, many people underestimate how far the Russian reforms have already progressed.

Official Visit Ends 16 Feb

LD1602092094 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0754 GMT 16 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Gennadiy Talalayev]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Feb—The official ceremony of saying good- bye to John Major, prime minister of Great Britain who is in Moscow at the invitation of Russian President Boris Yeltsin, took place this morning in St.George's Hall of the Grand Kremlin Palace.

The state anthems of Russia and Great Britain were played, and Boris Yeltsin accompanied John Major to the ceremonial entrance of the Grand Kremlin Palace where they parted warmly.

The official part of the visit of the British prime minister ended. He left the Kremlin for the "Vnukovo-2" Airport. He is accompanied by Viktor Chernomyrdin, the head of the Russian government. John Major will fly out to Nizhnyy Novgorod.

First Day of Talks Viewed

PM1502204994 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 Feb 94 p 1

[Mikhail Pogorelyy commentary: "Partnership Dialogue between Russia and Britain"]

[Text] In at least one thing British Prime Prime Minister John Major has a head start on virtually any European or indeed transl-Atlantic politician—scarcely anyone will be able to match him regarding the breadth and charm of his smile, and this regardless of the problems confronting Her Majesty's Conservative Government headed by John Major. There are enough of these problems: the split within the ruling party which is gradually coming to a head plus the opposition's attacks on the government's domestic economic positions.

Nevertheless, John Major is not downcast and he has arrived in Russia full, as always, of self-confidence and with a radiant smile. The official visit by the head of the British government is both symbolic and completely practical in nature.

Problems of bilateral relations between Russia and Great Britain were discussed during the meeting between President Boris Yeltsin and Prime Minister John Major in the Kremlin on the morning of 15 February and also during talks with an enlarged delegation in attendance. Other items also figured on the agenda: the general situation in Europe, the CIS, and the other states of the former Soviet Union; joint efforts to combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and so forth.

As was to be expexcted, special attention was paid to the Yugoslav crisis during these top-level talks. Our countries' concern over the situation in former Yugoslavia and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in particular, is understandable. Common historical interests, traditional links, and influence in the Balkans draw Russia to this region gripped by civil war. However, Great Britain too has just as much interest in peace in former Yugoslavia. The 1st Motorized Infantry Battalion of the Cheshire Infantry Regiment and other subunits, numbering around 1,500 men, form part of the Blue Beret contingent in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Moreover, since last month the command of the UN Forces in Bosnia has been in the hands of a British general. A very great deal regarding the current situation in both Sarajevo and the republic as a whole depends on the way that Lieutenant General Michael Rose sees the situation and ways of overcoming the conflict.

The Russian and British leaders acknowledge that we have a common main goal: the earliest possible end to bloodshed, the achievement of a just peace, and a politi'cal settlement of the crisis. However, there are also differences in the sides' approaches to the means of achieving that earliest possible end to bloodshed. Russia does not regard the NATO decision on the possibility of air strikes against Serbian ground positions as ideal. Nevertheless, despite all the reservations, there is in general a recognition of a lack of will or ability on the part of the United Nations to achieve success in the Yugoslav settlement, although it is premature to put this down to impotence.

It is important that our dialogue—equal, mutually respectful dialogue between partners—continue, and not just with the United States but also with traditional European states friendly toward Russia, in whose ranks Great Britain rightly belongs.

Queen of England Accepts Yeltsin's Invitation To Visit

LD1602112994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1101 GMT 16 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow February 16 TASS—Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland accepted the invitation of President Boris Yeltsin to visit Russia this year, the press service of the Russian leader said on Wednesday.

Kokoshin Meets With FRG's Klaus Naumann

LD1502175094 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1443 GMT 15 Feb 94

[by ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Gondusov]

[Text] Moscow February 15 TASS—Russia and Germany are in different stages of their internal development, but this does not lessen the importance of constructive, equal and mutually- advantageous relations between them, also along the military- political lines. This idea was emphasised during an interview with ITAR-TASS on Tuesday by First Russian Deputy Defence Minister Andrey Kokoshin after his meeting with Bundeswehr's Inspector-General Klaus Naumann.

Problems of military-political cooperation and armed forces development were discussed during the dialogue. Special attention was given to the shaping of the military budget and the financing of research. The sides expressed the confidence that Russo-German relations are of huge stabilising importance not only for Europe but also for other regions.

Klaus Naumann will meet on Tuesday with Colonel-General Viktor Samsonov, chief of staff for coordination of military cooperation of the CIS country.

During the visit to last till February 18, Klaus Naumann will address listeners and teachers of the academy of the general staff and will visit the 27th Guards Division of the Russian peacemaking forces in the Volga Military District. He will also visit Volgograd and St. Petersburg.

Inspection of Russian Forces' Positions in Germany

LD1602000994 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1615 GMT 15 Feb 94

[by ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksey Korinenko]

[Text] Wuensdorf, 15 Feb—An international inspection team has begun work at the positions of the Western Group of Forces [WGF] to check that the Russian Federation is complying with the provisions of the treaty on conventional armed Forces in Europe. The commision will comprise representatives of Canada, Italy, France, and Great Britain. As is known, the treaty which was signed in Paris on 19 November 1990 provides for each participant country to have certain quotas of armaments which can be achieved only by reductions in its existing combat equipment.

The main object of attention for the foreign inspectors who will be staying in the WGF's positions until 18 February will be the former tank repair works in Wuensdorf which since August 1992 has been turned into a base for destroying armored equipment.

As the ITAR-TASS correspondent was told in the WGF press center, before the final withdrawal of the Russian forces from Germany, it is planned to reduce the armored combat vehicles by 2,632, which represents 42 percent of the total number of these vehicles due to be reduced by the Russian Federation. To date 2,279 have already been reduced including 1,679 armored transports (BTR-60) and 600 infantry combat vehicles.

Over the period that the base for the destruction of combat equipment in Wuensdorf has been in operation, representatives of the states which are signatories to the treaty have carried out six inspections. There have been no complaints from the inspectors.

Trade in Nuclear Material Alarms German Police

PM1602121194 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Feb 94 First Edition p 3

[Report by Boris Lysenko: "German Police Fear Nuclear Terror"]

[Text] Berlin—The police are leaning toward the conclusion that the Lake Constance air crash (see IZVESTIYA Nos. 23, 24, and 26) was probably just a clever trick by criminals trying to cover their tracks.

The Cessna's passengers—Josef Rimmele and Klaus Eichler—were in cahoots with the "Russian nuclear mafia." But the Cessna could not have been carrying 70 kilograms of cesium-137, since it would have required a four-tonne lead container in order to prevent radioactive emissions. A Cessna-425 cannot lift that kind of load.

The federal police and intelligence service are warning of a new threat from the east. The intelligence service submitted a report to the FRG chancellor entitled "Nuclear Black Market—Nuclear Terror."

German specialists are particularly concerned about the increasing flow of radioactive materials from the CIS countries. Germany is acting as a staging post in the nuclear trade. In 1990 the police recorded four instances of "nuclear trade." In 1992 the figure was 158, while in 1993 there were exactly 200 attempts to sell radioactive materials.

What kind of wares are the businessmen from the CIS offering? From plutonium and uranium-235 to cesium-137, cobalt-60, and strontium-90.

One-half of the 300 people suspected of trading in radioactive materials are from East Europe. The vast majority are citizens of Poland and Russia. According to German intelligence data, Kaunas and Vilnius are centers of "illegal nuclear activity."

German citizens, mainly from the former GDR, are also involved in all these attempts to organize the trade in radioactive materials. For example, the Cessna's missing passenger, Josef Rimmele, had connections with Klaus-Peter Nedvig [name as transliterated], son of the former chief of the GDR police. His successor, Klaus Eichler, caught Interpol's eye after he had attempted to buy a consignment of osmium from a Hungarian.

The Russian mafia has spread throughout Germany, the German papers write.

The German police frankly admit that, unbeknownst to state institutions, Russian emigres have been able to establish an entire network of firms as a front for illegal business. These firms are in close touch with criminal groups inside the CIS.

Staff Aides on NATO's 'Creeping Expansion'

PM1502172094 Copenhagen BERLINGSKE TIDENDE SONDAG in Danish 13 Feb 94 p 1

[Report on interview with Generals Leonid Ivashov and Viktor Koslov by Flemming Rose in Moscow; date not given; from the MAGASIN section]

[Text] Moscow—"Is it on?" General Leonid Ivashov asked nodding at the tape recorder on the table in front of him.

"Hm, hm," was the positive response.

General Ivashov reached out for his packet of Monte Carlo filter cigarettes, lit one, and began to talk about his skepticism toward NATO's plan for cooperation with Russia's former allies in central and Eastern Europe.

"NATO's Partnership for Peace means firstly a creeping expansion of the alliance. Second, it means that NATO's armed forces will suddenly be standing at Russia's western border," the uniformed general said, exhaling smoke into the room. There was a knock at the door.

"Come in," the general growled, interrupting himself.

A servant-like young man wearing a white shirt and a tie entered. He was carrying a tray with five cups of freshly made coffee and these were placed in front of those present in General Ivashov's office: two Russian generals, two Russian colonels, and one Danish journalist who would like to hear something of what people here at the Staff for the Coordination of Military Cooperation in the CIS think about security developments in Europe and why Moscow has contacted Denmark with a view to military and political cooperation.

The serving of the coffee was very discreet and stylish and light years removed from what people are used to at the majority of Russian restaurants in the city.

Each person present had been given a note pad; on the table there was a crystal container filled with newly sharpened green pencils, mineral water, Coca Cola, and a plate of cookies and chocolate waffles.

They had really spared no effort.

General Ivashov is worried that the world will again be split into military blocs in competition with each other. According to the general, NATO's military cooperation with the former Eastern European countries and the Baltic republics is directed against Russia. Joint exercises and maneuvers are not something you hold for their own sake.

"I ask myself the whole time who these military efforts are directed against. Is this really necessary? It seems extremely doubtful."

My question about why Russia itself does not simply sign up for NATO's Partnership for Peace gave rise first to a short silence. General Ivashov glanced at his colleague, General Viktor Koslov, and then answered hesitantly with an apologetic smile.

"Russia could of course participate, but the question is whether Russia wants to. NATO's cooperation model assumes that there a first-class allies—that is, the old members of the alliance—and second-class allies—those countries which must undergo a process of admission which I would not perhaps call humiliating... but which would at least mean that Russia's legal status in the alliance would for a while be lower than that of Denmark and Luxembourg," said General Ivashov, whose words were being recorded by a uniformed colonel.

Here in the beautiful turquoise-colored building at Leningrad Boulevard 41 in the northern part of Moscow which was built on the initiative of Vasiliy Stalin, the dictator's son, immediately after World War II, the Warsaw Pact had its headquarters from 1955 up to its dissolution under Gorbachev. The CIS countries' defense staff moved into the aristocratic building in the spring of 1992.

The thermometer on the wall outside the main entrance showed minus 17 degrees on this Tuesday morning. The armed guard stood to attention and saluted as I drove into the staff's courtyard as an official guest. The snow crunched dryly under the tires.

The Russian generals think that NATO, instead of admitting Moscow's former allies by the back door, should begin strategic cooperation with the nine former Soviet republics which have joined in a collective security agreement in the CIS. It is Ivashov's view that the CIS and NATO should then jointly guarantee the security of the countries which stretch between the two blocs as a neutral belt.

"For example, I believe that the Baltic countries and Poland would feel just as safe with such an arrangement,"

said Ivashov, who fears that an expansion of NATO to the east will lead to the formation of new military blocs.

The four officers' uniforms are in contrast with the political aspect of the defense cooperation in the former Soviet Union. General Ivashov and his colleagues pushed the military aspects into the background the whole time and stressed the political aspects of cooperation. All decisions are made in line with the UN Charter and in consensus as in NATO.

It is partly in this context that the recent request from Moscow to Denmark with a call for cooperation on conflict prevention and peacekeeping operations must be seen. The CIS countries are tired of being ignored by NATO and are hoping that cooperation with Denmark within the framework of the North Atlantic Cooperation council will provide a better opportunity to make their voices heard in the international arena.

It is refreshing to see that there are no pictures of any bigwigs—either old or new—on the walls of General Ivashov's office.

The only decoration—if you can call it decoration—is the flags of the 12 CIS countries which stand in a row on the general's desk.

"The agreement on collective security in the former Soviet Union gives greater priority to political and international legal mechanisms than to the purely military aspect. Our experience shows that military intervention does not give rapid results, but rather leads a conflict into a blind alley," Ivashov said, taking a drink of coffee.

The general rejected the suggestion that Moscow is driven by imperialist ambitions in the former Soviet Union. Ivashov pointed out that in the past Moscow made all the decisions alone, and that it was then up to the republics to follow orders.

"It is not like that any more. The Soviet Union was a unified state. The CIS is a community of independent states. The collective security system presupposes civilized rules for interaction. Russia has no territorial claims on any country; we are all living up to our international commitments in the United Nations and the CSCE."

The Soviet Union fell apart at the end of 1991. To begin with a majority of the former Soviet republics tried to retain the Soviet army as a united army. However, these attempts failed. For a while the dream of a joint supreme command under the CIS lived on. People are now trying instead to cut their coat according to their cloth and for this reason the CIS command has had its name changed to the Staff for the Coordination of Military Cooperation in the CIS.

"We have now postponed the efforts to build a joint army because of economic difficulties and the political situation. Instead we are concentrating on coordination, so that individual national armies are built up according to the same principles," the general continued.

A post of secretary general has been created after the NATO model and for the first six months it is being filled by a Russian diplomat, Gennadiy Shabannikov, and not by a general, as would have been natural in the old days of the Soviet Union.

"We have thoroughly studied the lessons that NATO has learned and we are embracing the positive elements. However, unlike NATO we have no combat-ready troops under our command. We only have a coordinating role, we do not control armed forces, and unlike NATO we are not talking about expanding our area of responsibility," said General Ivashov, who did not shy away from commenting on new Russian comet and extremist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's geopolitical ambitions.

With a twinkle in their eyes Ivashov and his colleagues said that at times you could be tempted to think that the West itself has invented Zhirinovskiy to frighten its citizens with the danger of fascism in Russia and to use Zhirinovskiy as a legitimate argument for expanding the NATO's area of responsibility for security policy eastward.

"Zhirinovskiy's success in the elections is not linked to his geopolitical plans. He simply promised every single social group something concrete. And people believed this in the light of the difficult economic situation. He will have problems at the next elections when he will have to explain to the population why their lives have not gotten better as he promised," said General Ivashov, who asked his amanuensis to accompany me as I left through the empty marble halls.

Out in the quiet park the February cold bites into your face. The fir trees are covered with snow. In the middle of the park a bird sits on the 3-foot snow drifts—motionless despite the intense cold.

What sort of bird is it that has landed here in the CIS staff's park?

It looks like a raven.

It is at least neither a hawk nor a dove. Those sorts of birds are no longer suitable for describing what is happening in the field of defense policy in the former Soviet Union.

U.S. Commander Visits Joint Exercise Site

PM1502204594 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 15 Feb 94 First Edition p 2

[Viktor Litovkin report: "U.S. General Carries out Reconnoitering at Totskiy Training Ground"]

[Text] Brigadier General Leonard Holder Jr., commander of the U.S. 3rd Infantry Division, has arrived at the Totskiy training ground, Orenburg Oblast. He will participate in reconnoitering for the first-ever tactical exercise involving the two countries' peacemaking forces this July (IZVESTIYA No. 28).

General Holder Jr. began his service in the U.S. Army in 1966 and has taken part in combat operations in Saudi

Arabia, Iraq, and Kuwait; he has a masters degree in European history, has taught at the West Point military academy, and is the author of a number of works on tactics and the art of combat. The division which he commands comprises four motorized infantry and five tank battalions, three artillery divisions and one antiaircraft division, army air and engineering brigades, three brigade staffs, a communications battalion, and weapons of mass destruction defense and military police companies. It has 18,300 men, 290 tanks, 600 infantry fighting vehicles and armored personnel carriers [APC], 220 artillery pieces, including nine salvo-fire launchers, and 127 helicopters, 44 of them being attack helicopters.

The Russian 27th Division, which will take part in the peacemaking exercises with the American subunits, comprises 8,500 men, 200 tanks, 300 APCs and BMP6s [infantry fighting vehicles], and around 200 self-propelled guns, mortars, and salvo-fire systems. It has three motorized infantry regiments, tank, artillery and antiaircraft missile, combat engineer, and reconnaissance battalions, a communications battalion, a logistics company and a chemical weapons company.

During Operation Desert Storm the American division destroyed 105 enemy tanks and 70 enemy APCs and captured 836 soldiers. Eleven hundred of its servicemen are currently in Kuwait and in the the Turkish-Iraqi border region, carrying out peacemaking tasks.

Kozyrev Hails Israeli-PLO Accord

LD1502183094 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1706 GMT 15 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Andrey Serov]

[Text] Moscow 15 February TASS—Russian Minister Andrey Kozyrev has congratulated PLO Leader Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres on their agreement reached at bilateral negotiations in Cairo.

Russia estimates the Cairo document as a fore-sighted political step, that brought Israel and the PLO closer to the conclusion of a full-scale agreement on the Gaza Strip and Jericho, says a statement of the Russian Foreign Ministry circulated here today.

The agreements that regulate the implementation of the declaration on principles of temporary Palestinian self-government in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank are the result of a compromise.

The latter was made possible by thorough work for rapprochement of the sides' stands on complicated issues that had hampered the negotiations. These are communications, including corridors between Jericho and the Gaza Strip, security, in particular that of Israeli settlements, and check points.

The Foreign Ministry believes the most difficult part of implementation of the Gaza and Jericho formula has been done.

The Arab-Israeli negotiations are part of Russian-Israeli foreign political consultations underway in Moscow, said the statement.

Diplomat Says Talk on Sanctions Against DPRK Premature

LD1602114894 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1127 GMT 16 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Moscow February 16 TASS—A high ranking Russian diplomat who refused to be identified, explained here on Wednesday [16 February] the Russian position on demands to impose sanctions on North Korea in connection with its military nuclear programme.

According to the opinion the diplomat expressed in an interview with ITAR-TASS, talk on sanctions is premature while appropriate negotiations are under way, and possibilities of the negotiating process have not been exhausted. Besides, this issue will be discussed by the forthcoming session of the International Atomic Energy Agency Board of Governors.

The international community should display flexibility on this question and should use all available possibilities, he stressed.

Naval Commander Feliks Gromov Arrives in India

LD1402134894 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1153 GMT 14 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksey Kuznetsov]

[Text] Dehli, 14 Feb— Feliks Gromov, Russian Navy commander in chief, arrived in India today on a visit. In an interview with ITAR-TASS he said that "specific issues on the development of military and technical cooperation are to be resolved, taking into account the accords reached during the visit by Russian President Boris Yeltsin to India in January 1993."

Pointing out that the "Indian Ocean is important to Russia," F. Gromov said that the supply of spare parts and equipment for the republic's navy will be discussed at the talks with India's military leadership. The sides will also look into the prospects of holding joint naval exercises. According to the commander in chief of the Russian Navy, "there are no obstacles to this."

The program of his stay also envisages visits to Indian naval bases in Bombay and Vishakhapatnam, a naval academy, and shipyards in Goa.

Promises Spare Parts for Navy

LD1602073594 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0625 GMT 16 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksey Kuznetsov]

[Text] Delhi, 16 Feb—Admiral Feliks Gromov, commander in chief of the Russian Navy, currently on a visit to India, has assured official Delhi that supplies will be resumed soon of spare parts for Russian armaments in the Indian Navy.

In a conversation with his Indian colleague V.S. Shekhawat, he said the reason for his confidence was an outlined stabilization of the political situation in Russia. All obligations made by Moscow to arm the republic's armed forces, and among other things the navy, will be fulfilled.

Gromov was also received by the Minister of State for Defense, M. Mallikarjum. He had meetings with top officials in the defense department and commanders of branches of the army. Matters of mutual interest were discussed.

On Tuesday evening, the commander in chief of the Russian Navy went to Vishakhapatnam where he will visit a naval base and the headquarters of the eastern command of the republic's navy.

Deputy Defense Minister on Army in Dniester Region

LD1602055794 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2224 GMT 15 Feb 94

[By Itar-Tass correspondent Vladimir Gondusov]

[Text] Moscow, 16 February— It is politicians, not the military, who should decide the fate of the 14th Army deployed in the Dniester Region. We are ready to withdraw it as soon as tomorrow. This is the opinion of Russian Deputy Defense Minister Georgiy Kondratyev.

He flies to Tiraspol today. In a conversation with an ITAR-TASS correspondent on the eve of his trip, the military commander said work in "hot spots" was his official responsibility. "I should see for myself how our soldier fulfils his duties and what he needs".

General Kondratyev plans to visit Russian units of the 27th division of the Volga military district who, together with Dniester Region and Moldovan servicemen, are performing peacemaking functions in the region.

According to the deputy defense minister, his trip to the Dniester Region is a routine one and is not connected with any special events in the troops. However, Georgiy Kondratyev said, there is bound to be a conversation with Lieutenant-General Lebed, commander of the 14th Army, about his "recent comments". The two generals will also exchange opinions of the situation in the region.

Tajik Premier's Moscow Talks Reported

MK1502114094 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 15 Feb 94 p 3

[Report by Konstantin Smirnov and Grigoriy Selyaninov: "Russia's Talks With CIS Partners. Central Asia Republics Update Their Positions"]

[Excerpts] Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan government delegations were in Moscow on Saturday. Agreed with Kyrgyzstan was the volume of mutual deliveries in 1994. The subject of negotiations with Tajik Premier Abdudzhalil Samadov was broader—not only trade and economic cooperation in the current year, but also updating the side's positions in connection with the republic's joining the ruble zone. [passage omitted]

The Tajik delegation faced a more difficult task. Among other things, it was to finalize the questions of the country's joining the ruble zone. Those were also discussed with Economy Minister Aleksandr Shokhin and Central Bank Chairman Viktor Gerashchenko. Tajikistan received the Bank of Russia's "okay" for setting aside for the republic the second batch of 60 billion rubles in cash to be exchanged for the old money on condition that Dushanbe provides collateral in gold. It is this condition that proved unacceptable for Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan last November when projects for a ruble zone consisting of six states were actively discussed. To all appearances, neither can Tajikistan, despite the assurances that it is ready to enter the ruble zone, fully meet this condition. Instead, Moscow has been offered two electric power stations—the Nurek and the Rogun. The Tajik side also promises to introduce into its legislation on foreign investments specific changes to safeguard Russia's interests.

The difficult military-political situation in Tajikistan makes the wisdom of such acquisitions rather debatable for Russia. A Russian government delegation led by German Kuznetsov, deputy minister for cooperation with the CIS countries, is leaving for Dushanbe today. The delegation is to specify the Russian side's stance on the questions of Tajikistan's joining the Russian monetary system.

Tajikistan Chairman Meets Chernomyrdin, Kozyrev

LD1602112494 Dushanbe Radio Tajikistan Network in Russian 1000 GMT 16 Feb 94

[Text] It is already one week since the government delegation of Tajikistan arrived in Moscow.

Abdulmadjid Samadov, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Tajikistan, who is at the head of the delegation, met Viktor Chernomyrdin, the prime minister of Russia, yesterday.

The issues related to entry of the Republic of Tajikistan to the ruble zone of a new type were discussed in the course of the meeting.

Before the meeting Abdulmadjid Samadov met Andrey Kozyrev, the minister of foreign affairs of the Russian Federation.

Issues concerning relations between two states were discussed in the course of the meeting.

Parliamentary Officials Visit Rayon Claimed by Estonia

PM1502142794 Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 12 Feb 94 p 1

[Report by correspondent Viktor Karpov under the "Behind the Screen of Big-Time Politics" rubric: "The Pechorskiy Rayon Card"]

[Excerpts] Pskov Oblast—The Tartu (Yuryev) Treaty of 1920, on which Estonia bases its current territorial claims to Pskov Oblast's Pechorskiy Rayon, is just an "ordinary scrap of worthless paper," State Duma Deputy Vladimir Lukin (until recently Russian ambassador to the United States) stated in Pechory 9 February, explaining that it was concluded on behalf of Russia "not by the country or the government but by one of the sides engaged in the civil war or, more precisely, by a group of antipeople politicians." Citing a telling historical parallel, the parliamentarian said that to recognize the Tartu Treaty as the foundation of today's interstate relations between Russia and Estonia would be like Hetman Semenov, who also signed a territorial agreement in Manchuria, concluding a treaty with China on the establishment of today's Russian state borders. Time itself and the existing historical realities have sidestepped and sidelined the unfortunate Tartu Treaty.

The statement is as unambiguous as it is significant, for it shows that at last a stance is developing on the part of Russian parliamentary circles toward the acute "Estonian question" or, more accurately, toward the "Pechorskiy Rayon card," which the Estonian side invariably plays in order to stymie the so far fruitless Russian-Estonian talks on interstate relations. The talks have been going on without any progress for a long time now because Estonia's appetite for Pechorskiy Rayon acts as a stumbling block. And this is evidenced not just in words but in deeds, for the "right" to Pechorskiy soil has already been enshrined in nothing less than the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia. [passage omitted]

It is surprising but true that all the Baltic state's maneuvers and intrigues were until recently met with drowsy indifference or, at best, a wait-and-see approach, thereby encouraging those bent on acquiring others' land to engage in more and more subversive acts. And here it is not just territorial appetites, not just rowdy scenes involving Estonian nationalist organizations periodically staged on the Russian border. The poisonous seeds of enmity toward Russians nurtured in Estonia's political inner sanctum can only cause you to wonder. [passage omitted]

Only the local authorities, in concert with the oblast administration, are now tackling the problem of the border territories and endeavoring to issue statements and reassure people that "not an inch of Russian soil will be ceded." (Incidentally, inhabitants of Pechorskiy Rayon also heard such assurances from Rutskoy, Khasbulatov, and Chernomyrdin—and what came of that?) Albeit worn out by the uncertainty, the inhabitants of the border region do nevertheless regard these statements with mistrust—Pskov, after all, is not Moscow, where big-time politics is played, and they do not believe that the Russian authorities are capable of protecting them.

Thank God that the Pechorskiy Rayon question is finally being taken up in earnest by Russian parliamentarians, and high-ranking ones at that: Namely V. Lukin, chairman of the State Duma International Affiars Committee, and V. Podoprigora, chairman of the Federation Council's identically named committee. During their one-day trip to Pechorskiy Rayon they studied the work of the border control points and the problems of providing a border infrastructure, and met with customs officials, border guards, and representatives of the rayon public. A conference to sum up the results in which Oblast Governor V. Tumanov took part was held at the rayon administration.

"The aim of our trip was to study all the conflicts surrounding the "Pechorskiy Rayon question"' V. Podoprigora said in summation, "and to convey the full acuteness of the prevailing situation to parliament, the government, and the president. In our view, it is essential that special parliamentary hearings be held on this question to elaborate at last a clear Russian stance and to spur the supreme authorities to take practical measures to disavow the 'Pechorskiy card' once and for all."

It is time, high time this were done!

Political Issues

Yeltsin Address Delayed Due to 'Recent Illness'

LD1502205894 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1947 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] The annual presidential message to the Federal Assembly will be read on February 24, the president's chief of staff Sergey Filatov told the meeting of the State Duma Council Tuesday night [15 February].

In his words, the date was changed from February 18 because Boris Yeltsin has not completely recovered from his recent illness and because representatives of the country's regions think the message should be read on the eve of the expanded government meeting which is scheduled for February 25.

The Council agreed with Filatov's arguments and left the debate of the Constitutional Court bill out of the Duma's February 17 agenda because the president's headquarters had to discuss numerous provisions of the bill with its authors, the Court.

Filatov also informed the State Duma Council on the proposal, made by the president's headquarters, on the housing of the lower house. Two or three months after the repair in the Russian Management Academy building is complete the Duma can move into it and next fall, into the former Gosplan's building in Okhotny Ryad. A decision was made that this proposal should be discussed first by parliamentary groups and then by a plenary session of the State Duma.

The lower house speaker Ivan Rybkin told the Council that President Yeltsin had decided to let former people's deputies of the USSR and Russia stay in their Moscow flats provided to them by the government.

Yeltsin Not 'Recovered Completely'

LD1502181694 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1644 GMT 15 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow February 15 TASS—Vyacheslav Kostikov, spokesman of the Russian president, warned against speculations about the health of the Russian president and hinted that Boris Yeltsin is healthy enough to run for the second term of office in 1996.

"Political speculations based on rumours and malevolence about the health of Boris Yeltsin look extremely ugly and unpatriotic. This does not correspond to the Russian character," Kostikov said in a statement on Tuesday.

"I have to tell those who would like to use the question of the health of the president for their political intrigues and ambitions that the health of Boris Yeltsin allows him to reliably and resolutely run the country during the term of office fixed by the constitution, and in case of state necessity and the choice of the people, also outside this term," the spokesman stressed.

He was evidently referring to those political forces who hope to replace Yeltsin in case he steps down because of health reasons before his term of office expires in 1996. According to the constitution, early presidential elections become inevitable in this case.

Kostikov confirmed that the president had suffered from a strong cold of late and said that Yeltsin had to breach the advised medical regime to hold talks with visiting British Prime Minister John Major on Tuesday.

The spokesman added that Yeltsin had not yet recovered completely and thus the presidential "state of the nation" address to parliament may be postponed.

Speech Postponement Blamed on Bosnia

LD1502185494

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 1725 GMT on 15 February carries the "Details" program dealing with Bosnia, Russian-British talks, and British affairs.

The program concludes with announcer Sergey Dorenko saying: "As we learned this morning from our sources in the Kremlin, the president will postpone his keynote address to parliament from 18 February to 24 February, and an official announcement on this will be made a little later. Our sources believe that now is not the time for the president to speak to parliament while there still remains the slightest hope of a peaceful resolution of the Bosnian crisis. In parliament, there are very many politicians who are capable of demanding of Yeltsin the most resolute measures up to and including military ones."

Filatov Comments on Yeltsin's Health

LD1502215694

[Editorial Report] Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian at 1645 GMT on 15 February carries an untitled recorded program in which Sergey Filatov, presidential chief of staff, reviews last week's political events with an unidentified interviewer.

An introductory comment says: "Last week did not abound in vivid domestic policy events." What actually happened was that the State Duma, "which has not yet adopted a single important law," discussed the question of moving out of the old mayor's office and into the White House. It also set up a commission to look into the events of 3-4 October. Members of the old and new economic schools continued to argue about future government policy. "The president reduced his activities owing to illness. That may be why the latest package of decrees signed by him did not look as impressive as during the previous week."

After briefly surveying the various decrees on personnel changes, Filatov says: "In accordance with a directive from the president, the signing took place of a protocol on

political consultations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Azerbaijan. In general, I must say that it is a very good document, since it does place on a permanent footing the dialogue between the leadership of these republics at various levels and on all matters, and that is precisely what is said in the document, which is to be signed by the Foreign Ministry on the instructions of the president."

Asked about moves to bring the president into conflict with parliament, Filatov looks at the three possible sites that parliament could occupy, according to a suggestion from Lukyanov—the Kremlin, Old Square, and the White House—and dismissed each one as a practical impossibility.

The interviewer then asks about the state of the president's health, since there is considerable speculation about it. Filatov replies: "There is a lot of flu about in Moscow at the moment, as you all know. There have been many cases. As far as I remember, we expected Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin on Monday. He really did want to come, but later he felt unwell. You know the way it goes: Sometimes you get up and it passes off once you are on your feet, and, at other times, the illness knocks you out. I don't think that he managed to avoid that insidious illness. It seems quite normal to me."

Filatov on Reform of President's Administration

LD1502232894 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1106 GMT 15 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS observer Tamara Zamyatina]

[Text] Moscow, 15 Feb—"The difference in principle in the Russian president's administration which is being reformed lies in the new constitutional functions of the head of state which must be guaranteed." This was how Sergey Filatov, the Russian president's head of administration, explained the meaning of the reorganization being conducted in the Kremlin's corridors of power in an interview to an ITAR-TASS correspondent.

Two parallel branches, as it were, remain in the apparatus of the head of state: the staff of assistants of the president, headed by Viktor Ilyushin, and the administration proper, led by Sergey Filatov. Asked whether the presence of two parallel structures in the apparatus of the president is an unnecessary duplication, Sergey Filatov replied that he sees no contradiction in this because "all assistants of the president work for the head of state, using the administration apparatus for the fulfillment of their tasks." The number of assistants of the president in various fields of activity will be increased.

The head of administration named among the new structures the economic analysis service, the finance and budget section, and the international department. The head of state needs these structures because "the president, in accordance with the new constitution, no longer heads the government, but at the same time needs to be well informed on the state of the economy, the budget and tax policy," Sergey Filatov explained. However, the formation of sections with functions of executive power under the president is already arousing criticism to the effect that the norm of the division of powers enshrined in the Russian constitution are being violated. This collision could become an occasion for reproach against the president, as was recently declared, in particular, by State Duma Deputy Sergey Shakhray.

The administration staff will also include the new Directorate of the Federal State Service. The Council for Cadre Policies under the president, set up in spring last year, is headed by three co-chairmen—Sergey Filatov, Oleg Soskovets, and Vladimir Shumeyko. Three commissions under this council "will deal with the preliminary assessment of cadres": They are the commissions for judicial cadres (headed by Minister of Justice Yuriy Kalmykov), for foreign cadres, and for senior military titles and posts. "Their task includes the accumulation of a data bank on cadres and their professional training," Sergey Filatov pointed out.

The president's analytical service is being substantially reformed. A Council of Experts is being set up in it which will very likely be headed by Sergey Filatov, and there will also be a Center of Special Presidential Programs and an analytical service proper. The composition of the Presidential Council will also be renewed and filled with new names.

The number of staff in the administration of the president of Russia is currently, according to its chief, 1,983 (but a full strength of 2,000 is proposed).

The president will approve the final scheme of the reorganization of his apparatus in the next few days, Sergey Filatov reported.

Filatov Urges Better Yeltsin Ties With Parliament

LD1502140394 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1330 GMT 15 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS analyst Tamara Zamyatina]

[Text] Moscow February 15 TASS—Relations between the Russian president and the new legislature have aggravated again after the law-makers set up a lower house commission to investigate the armed rebellion in Moscow on October 3-4 and called for a new building to house the parliament, Yeltsin's chief of staff Sergey Filatov told ITAR-TASS and Ostankino Television.

Filatov disapproved of the setting up of a house investigatory commission because the Russian Federal Prosecutor's Office is already conducting an investigation into the matter on its own. He blamed the president's envoy to the parliament Aleksandr Yakovlev for the shortfall: He should have proposed that the law-makers hear the federal prosecutor first or wait until an official statement was made by the investigators. Any duplication of investigative efforts generates mistrust and confrontation, Filatov suggested.

As concerns a new residence for the State Duma, Filatov said Moscow simply did not have a building to suit the tastes of the lower house. Commenting on (former Soviet parliament speaker) Anatoliy Lukyanov's proposal that the Russian legislature be given the building of the former Soviet parliament in the Kremlin, Filatov said the building was now occupied by the president and his staff while the neighboring residence of the head of state was under repair, which is due to last for three years.

As for the former Communist Party Central Committee buildings in Staraya Square, for which the Duma asked as an alternative, it housed the federal government and some other departments, the Moscow regional duma and administration, and the presidential staff. Filatov said.

The number of rooms in the "White House" which was earlier occupied by the Russian parliament dissolved last September, is insufficient to provide offices for all the 450 deputies of the present legislature, each of whom wants to employ several assistants for the 80 minimal wages [as received] granted them. The house committees and commissions, factions and technical services as well as the Secretariat are also building up their staffs, who will need at least 1000 offices.

Filatov said a combined version will probably be offered to the Duma, including the building of the former State Planning Committee in Okhotny Ryad.

It is more important to avoid squabbling but arrange constructive interaction between the chambers of the Federal Assembly, the president and the government. Towards this are now working the president's representative in the parliament Aleksandr Yakovlev, Yeltsin's aide Georgiy Satarov and a department of the president's staff. "This is a daily uphill job, but I know that President Bill Clinton's staff thinks nothing is more important than interaction with the Congress", Filatov stressed.

He added that the presidential message to the parliament on the state of the federation will urge all three branches of power to interact constructively in making effective in practice the constitutional provisions which protect human rights, ensure reforms and combat crime.

The president has prepared a package of 60 bills on economic and court reforms, and on the state system, as well as draft civil, land and environmental codes, Filatov added.

Pamfilova Resumes Post as Social Protection Minister

LD1502225794 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1600 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] After a holiday and a brief illness, Russia's Minister of Social Protection of the Population Ella Pamfilova resumed her responsibilities. A RIA correspondent was told this from the ministry's press center. According to information from this same source, head of the Government Viktor Chernomyrdin did not accept Ella Pamfilova's previously tendered resignation from her post.

Announces 'Final' Decision To Resign

LD1602135894 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1220 GMT 16 Feb 94

[Text] On Wednesday Ella Pamfilova, Russia's Social Security Minister, reported to INTERFAX about her "final and firm" intention to resign. "This decision is a result of much thinking and three notes on resignation which I have presented to the Cabinet's leadership since this January," Pamfilova said in her exclusive interview with our news agency.

"I do not want to be a screen nor to reassure in vain people who need social support and security. I cannot do anything in the government with such a composition. At the same time I do not want this government to fall because real chaos could come out of the ruin," said Pamfilova.

At the same time, she admits that an opportunity for the present Cabinet could be lost in the near "two-three months." I would not like to be among the people who are willy-nilly building the road to Zhrinovskiy's power," declared Pamfilova. In her words, the government would become viable if Yegor Gaydar returns to it as the first prime minister and Boris Fedorov—as leader of the economic sphere.

"I hope I shall have an opportunity to explain my decision and my position to President Yeltsin in detail," said Pamfilova.

On Wednesday she conducted a conference with her department's staff and explained the motives for her resignation.

Shakhray Stresses Federalization Principle

LD1502170094 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1427 GMT 15 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Lyudmila Yermakova]

[Text] Moscow February 15 TASS—Federalisation is the only way to preserve Russia as an integral state, said Sergey Shakhray, Russian minister for nationalities and regional policy. He addressed on Tuesday an international conference on Russia's federal structure and the implementation of the principles of pluralistic democracy, rule-of-law state and human rights. Federalisation does not mean the weakening of the state. It means an opportunity to combine rich potentials of all regions and democratic unification of society, Shakhray said. A new form of state structure has emerged and is developing. The notion of federalism includes economic and territorial aspects.

The new constitution ensures equal rights of all subjects of the federation, Shakhray said. He pointed to the importance of working out various forms in integration within Russia. The initial experience in this respect is the activity

of interregional economic associations in whose framework subjects with different status interact.

The constitution laid down the principles of self-regulation of the federation, the minister said. Preserving Russia's character it registered the possibility of regulating processes of the separation of powers by federal and other treaties. It deals with matters that are in the competence of subjects and joint competence of central authorities and regions. A treaty with Tatarstan that may be concluded today is based on these articles of the constitution.

Prevention and settlement of ethnic conflicts is the priority task, the minister said. He believes these conflicts are caused by redivision of power, of property, by organised crime.

Shakhray said the ethnic form of conflicts is a most convenient camouflage for real aims of certain political forces. The Russian Federation is the common house where there is room for all forms of self-organisation—republics, regions, autonomies, Shakhray said.

Shakhray's Elevation Seen as Face-Saving Measure

MK1502110094 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 15 Feb 94 p 2

[Report by Larisa Yevtushik: "Minister Joins Government Presidium. Sergey Shakhray Has Obtained Special Status"]

[Excerpts] Sergey Shakhray, who has yet again performed a balancing act between a boost or a fall in his career, has won once more. He appears not only to have strengthened his position in the reformed government, but also to have secured a special status among his executive branch colleagues: Last weekend Boris Yeltsin issued an edict elevating Sergey Shakhray to the Council of Ministers Presidium.

Your KOMMERSANT-DAILY correspondent was told at the Council of Ministers press service that the government presidium is made up of Viktor Chernomyrdin himself and his deputies. Their weekly meetings on Thursday are considered presidium sessions. Now the only "regular minister"—Sergey Shakhray, chief of the ministry for nationalities and regional policy—will attend the meetings as a full member.

Not long ago Sergey Shakhray complained to journalists that the most urgent problems, such as talks with Chechnya and Tatarstan, have been resolved without him. According to Shakhray, he obtained a copy of the draft bilateral treaty with Kazan only after he publicly expressed his bewilderment in that regard for the umpteenth time.

Sergey Shakhray, who has repeatedly said that he personally and his Party for Russian Unity and Accord [PRES] support Viktor Chernomyrdin, was nonetheless ready to quit unless the minister for nationalities and regional policy was given special status, because the situation in this area requires him to have the broadest possible powers to resolve the most sensitive matters.

Given that Boris Yeltsin has been disapprovingly viewing "all those Shakhrays" setting sights on the presidential office, and that the new structure does not envision the post of nationalities minister/deputy Council of Ministers chairman, one could surmise that Shakhray's days in the cabinet were numbered. But this time around, as has already been the case a number of times, it turned out that the high echelons of power cannot do without this man, who has worked in the hottest spots of political activity. [passage omitted]

It cannot be ruled out that Sergey Shakhray, who knows his way around legal rules and office relations perfectly well, may have himself proposed the compromise way out of the situation to the president and the prime minister (who had said, as a matter of fact, that he would not accept anyone's ultimatums when the issue was Boris Fedorov). His joining the presidium—a body not envisioned by the constitution—elevates the minister's status and enables him to take part in decisionmaking on matters concerning his ministry. At the same time, this step does not require the president to amend his edict on the structure of the Council of Ministers or to introduce yet another post of deputy prime minister above the quota, as was the case with Anatoliy Chubays. Understandably, such an appointment would only have intensified talk about Boris Yeltsin's inconsistency, something which does not add authority to presidents.

Chernomyrdin Assigns Deputy Premiers Tasks

LD1502150594 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1411 GMT 15 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oleg Velichko]

[Text] Moscow, 15 Feb—Russian Government Chairman Viktor Chernomyrdin today signed a decision on the distribution of responsibilities between the various deputy premiers.

First Deputy Prime Minister Oleg Soskovets will coordinate, among other things, investment policy and defense industry. He will also head the government's commission on operational issues and coordinate the activities of 15 ministries, state committees, and departments.

Aleksandr Zaverukha will concentrate mainly on agriculture and hydrometeorology, while Anatoliy Chubays will continue to handle the privatization program and antimonopoly policy. Responsibilities for social policy and cooperation between the government and representative bodies, political parties and public organizations have been transferred to Yuriy Yarov.

Russia's economics minister, Aleksandr Shokhin—who is a member of the government presidium—will coordinate the economic reform and the work of the Russian Federation Ministry for Cooperation with CIS States.

Boris Fedorov Says Government 'Weak'

MK1502105094 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 15 Feb 94 p 1

[Yelena Kolokoltseva report under the "Finances" rubric: "Boris Fedorov Prepared To Embrace Viktor Gerashchenko Should the Latter Submit to State Duma Report on Central Bank's Financial Activities"]

[Text] Former Vice Premier Boris Fedorov told journalists yesterday that Premier Chernomyrdin to all appearances had not expected what happened in the wake of his statement about correcting the course of reforms and about combating inflation by "nonmonetary methods." "The government is patently weak: It gives promises by the hour but does not realize that one can only give promises when each promise is realistically substantiated. The cabinet was reorganizing itself for a month, while ever fresh corrections of the budget were taking place," Mr. Fedorov stated. He also noted that while the Finance Ministry assessed real budget revenue at 80 to 90 trillion rubles a month ago, today it assesses it at 130 trillion although no new receipts have been registered. According to Mr. Fedorov, this is yet another attempt at window dressing. Correcting budget figures in this manner cannot result in stabilizing finances and, in Mr. Fedorov's view, is only applicable "in a bid to receive the next $1.5 billion from the IMF and to prove that reforms in Russia are continuing." The budget deficit, he declared, would amount under the present draft budget to 100 trillion rather than 40-50 trillion as was projected earlier, which would result in a collapse of the financial system and an explosion of hyperinflation three or so months after.

As a result of "the government's flailing around," Mr. Fedorov believes, "the Pandora box has been opened: Production workers are threatening strikes, and numerous lobbyists are demanding money." However, he said, now many members of the current cabinet (including both Mr. Soskovets and Mr. Grachev) "are now ready to agree with me. Zaveryukha's greedy appetites are too immense."

Boris Fedorov said that very soon the committee on budget, taxes, and prices is going to organize Duma hearings on the government's monetary policy, and he would like to hope that "these hearings will be different than the hearings on economic policy." Boris Fedorov, who last week was elected chairman of the Duma subcommittee on control over the Central Bank's activities, is obviously expecting Viktor Gerashchenko's report with interest. "I am prepared to embrace Mr. Gerashchenko," he declared, "I only still would like the Central Bank chairman to submit for Duma consideration not simply a one-page report as was the case in 1992, but to include in it a balance sheet of the bank's financial activities."

Russia's Choice Discusses Formation of Party

PM1602110194 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 15 Feb 94 First Edition p 2

[Report by Valeriy Vyzhutovich: "'Russia's Choice' Holds Secret Council on the Banks of the Pakhra"]

[Text] Around 100 representatives of "Russia's Choice" spent Saturday and Sunday in Krasnaya Pakhra, where, hidden from the prying eyes of the press, they immediately got down to building the party they had announced the day before.

The foundation of this new party edifice, which is being erected in accordance with a radical plan, was laid by a program statement declaring that the "corrupt bureaucracy is increasingly taking the center stage of political life, together with right- and left-wing radical (fascist and communist) antireformist forces." According to the authors of the statement, the "executive branch, instead of countering reaction, is getting further and further away from the course of reforms, accompanying the revision of their basic principles with declarations of loyalty to them." Therefore, the "Russia's Choice" party (the name is still being worked on) intends to unite "all those for whom freedom, human dignity, and the prosperity of the Fatherland and its citizens are not empty words and who are prepared inside and outside parliament, in individual and mass actions, to act as guarantors of reforms, guarantors of Russia's renewal."

Predictably, the ideological declaration did not meet with any objections on the part of those attending the political weekend. After all, the Russian radical democrats exchange oaths of loyalty to liberalism as regularly as they do vehemently, which does not prevent them in any way from multiplying the splits and discord in their ranks and piling up mutual grievances and criticism. But what guarantees are there that the new political alliance of radical reformers will be viable and effective?

"Russian democracy is terrible at times of victory," Yegor Gaydar, the chief instigator of the future party, said in an exclusive interview for IZVESTIYA (the conversation took place in a luxury suite in the leisure complex near Moscow where the conference participants spent the two days). "When they win the democrats immediately start having deep and meaningful discussions, deciding who should do what, and arguing over trivia. But at moments of danger Russian democracy is capable of united, organized action. We are going through just such a time at the moment."

"What was the main source of disagreement during the two-day talks?"

"Organizational matters, as ever. The principle underlying the structure of the party. The founder-membership. The norms of representation on leading bodies."

One of the cofounders of the party, together with "Russia's Choice," is the "Democratic Russia" movement. Its regional structures, amorphous though they may be at present, will find a new use. But an argument has already developed between the leaders of the future alliance in the capital and in the provinces over the principle whereby the leasding body is to be formed, how many seats Moscow will get and how many the provinces will get. The allocation of party portfolios has begun.

Yegor Gaydar's intention is that the new party should not be a rehash of existing movements and organizations. A

fundamentally new alliance of reformists is being created. It is clear from the program statement that it intends to pursue a "line of constructive dialogue with the federal government and local administrations, taking issue with them on vital matters." It was stipulated that "if the intention to curtail the reforms is put into practice, the party is prepared to oppose the present cabinet." The latter statement has considerable piquancy, given that Vice Premier Anatoliy Chubays, who also participated in the talks near Moscow, will be one of the party's leaders.

Making it known that the party is not responsible for the government's activites and their results, the conference participants, in their program statement, skillfully delineated their attitude toward Boris Yeltsin: "We draw a clear line between the president and all the other structures of executive power. 'Russia's Choice' will give social and political support to the course of reforms President Yeltsin has been conducting since 1991. We support a president who is conducting this course. We criticize the president insofar as he himself is deviating from this course under pressure from various circumstances."

Yegor Gaydar announced that the party's founding congress will take place at the end of May at the earliest. The former vice premier said that the delayed birth of the new political alliance is due to a multitude of organizational problems. But that is probably not the reason. The initiators and creators of the party probably want the founding forum to take place against a particular political and economic background. It is hard to predict what this background will be like by the beginning of the summer. The leaders of the new political alliance are intending to bring into their ranks small and medium-size entrepreneurs, skilled workers, and the intelligentsia and are hoping that a wave of social discontent in the spring and the summer will wash many more supporters to their party shore than they have at the moment.

PRES Urges Pardon for Rutskoy, Khasbulatov

MK1602112094 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 16 Feb 94 p 3

[Yelena Tregubova report in the "Position" column: "PRES Will Vote To Amnesty Rutskoy and Khasbulatov. Not Because They Are Innocent, But for the Sake of National Concord"]

[Text] The Party of Russian Unity and Accord [PRES] faction has decided to support a draft resolution on amnesty which is to be discussed in today's session of the Duma. As PRES leaders noted at a faction conference, this draft envisions in particular amnesty for convicts and defendants under article 79 of the Penal Code—"organization of mass disturbances," and if it is adopted, the ringleaders of the October rebellion will be set free. "But our faction will vote in favor, explaining that this is not recognition of their innocence but an act of national conciliation, and we say that after leaving prison, the organizers of the October disorders must not start everything all over again," Sergey Shakhray said. True, the PRES leader admitted that there are no guarantees that when Rutskoy and Khasbulatov are released, unrest will not begin again. Moreover, Shakhray said that this course of events is "very, very likely." His faction colleague Sergey Stankevich recalled that convicted under Article 79 were also those who organized riots in penal colonies or took hostages, outlining in this connection the "nice" prospects for Russia in the event that such "a humane action of total amnesty is undertaken."

Yet the doubts of Sergey Shakhray's comrades were dispelled by his "right-hand man," Konstantin Zatulin, who said, "If we do not support the draft, we shall be accused of being enemies of the people, seeking to keep Khasbulatov and Rutskoy in prison forever...." Furthermore Mr. Zatulin, saying that "part of the blame" for the October riots lies on the executive branch, assured that the ex-speaker and the ex-vice president "must not be amnestied but completely rehabilitated in their rights, based on investigation results." Therefore that part of the PRES representing Konstantin Zatulin's followers will apparently support the Communist Party, the Agrarian Party, the Liberal Democratic Party, and the Yavlinskiy bloc, which are planning to set up "a deputies commission to investigate the 3-4 October events," which issue will also be discussed in the Duma today.

To "emphasize the faction's commitment to the principles of national conciliation" the PRES members agreed on voting day to circulate a corresponding "clarification document" in the Duma." "Maybe Baburin and others will vote in favor simply because they want to see Khasbulatov and Rutskoy at large, but we shall vote for this for other motives," Sergey Stankevich summed up the PRES' position.

Coup Organizer Claims Gorbachev 'Hated' CPSU

LD1502182994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1724 GMT 15 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Igor Belskiy]

[text] Moscow February 15 TASS—An organiser of the 1991 abortive Soviet coup accused Mikhail Gorbachev, the former Soviet president and general secretary of the Communist Party, of hating the CPSU and losing control over the country which resulted in the collapse of the Soviet Union.

"The (Communist) Party hated Mikhail Gorbachev the way he hated it", Oleg Shenin, former secretary of the CPSU Central Committee, told the trial which probes the coup on Tuesday.

"The tragedy of the Soviet Union was that head of state Mikhail Gorbachev lost the reigns of control over the country", he added.

This was the subjective reason for the collapse of the Soviet Union, according to him.

"There were no major objective reasons for the collapse of the USSR—there were only subjective reasons", Shenin said and added that the coup was organised in order "to save the union state".

He added that he had for long advocated extraordinary measures to improve the deteriorating economic situation in the former USSR.

Says Gorbachev Gave 'Go Ahead'

LD1502181494 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1413 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] The last words Mikhail Gorbachev said to the plotters who visited him on August 18, 1991 at his summer cottage in Foros were: "Go Ahead", said the former secretary of the CPSU Central Committee Oleg Shenin.

Shenin is accused of state treason. Together with Valentin Varennikov and Oleg Baklanov he visited on August 18 the then Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev at his summer cottage in Foros (the Crimea).

Shenin said Gorbachev warmly welcomed their arrival and their talk lasted 45-50 minutes in a friendly atmosphere. Shenin emphasized that Gorbachev was aware of the difficulty the country was in and the fact that the signing of the Union treaty would cause the country's disintegration.

Shenin said that after the conversation the president approved the introduction of the state of emergency in the country, though he said that the decision should be taken by parliament or the Congress of People's Deputies.

Shenin said that in the presence of other plotters, Gorbachev began to write the message to parliament. However, he gave up the idea because he did not want to leave written evidence that he shared the idea of imposing a state of emergency.

Answering the questions put by the prosecution, Shenin said that no ultimatums were issued to Gorbachev and that the plotters treated him as the president.

According to Shenin, on August 18, 1991, Gorbachev declined Baklanov's proposal to return to Moscow together with the plotters saying he was not well. He claims Gorbachev had done this deliberately wait and see how the situation would develop.

Answering the prosecution's questions on the alleged blockade at Gorbachev's dacha, Shenin said that the president was free to do what he pleased.

Shenin's interrogation will be continued Wednesday, February 16, at 10 A.M.

Plans for 'Radio Zhirinovskiy' Outlined

PM1502152394 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 15 Feb 94 p 3

[Article by Stas Stremidlovskiy: "Falcons of the Airwaves Will Bend Everyone's Ears"]

[Text] First of all a quotation, excuse me for being immodest, from our own newspaper, KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA on 15 December 1993: "In Yelena Bonner's opinion, journalists who were too harsh in their criticism of the reforms are chiefly to blame for Zhirinovskiy's victory." This was said after the results of December's elections, which shocked us all. Let me remind readers that at the time journalists were also blamed for paying excessive attention to Vladimir Volfovich himself.

Until today, I personally have tried not to write about Mr. Zhirinovskiy, because any mention of his name in the press is an indirect advertisement for him. But having looked through some documents I received from an acquaintance in the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia [LDPR], I realized that the time has now come to refer to the leader of this party in print.

Well then. The first document is "A Blueprint for Broadcasts by the 'Radio Zhirinovskiy' Radio Station." First of all we have the preamble: **"The existence of his own radio station will make Vladimir Zhirinovskiy even more popular and boost the number of his potential voters."** I invite you to memorize this statement carefully; we will have reason to recall it.

Now for the details. The authors of the blueprint give a detailed description of the planned items that will be broadcast on "Radio Zhirinovskiy." There will be Zhirinovskiy Hour—an hour of listeners' questions answered live by the LDPR leader. Then there is music from Zhirinovskiy's childhood—a program specially for older listeners. Zhirinovskiy request time will consist of several hours a week of the great man's musical requests dedicated to "Travkin, Burbulis, Yeltsin, Lukyanov, Saddam Husayn, and Clinton." Zhirinovskiy's favorite tunes will acquaint listeners with the leader's preferred melodies. Finally, It's Your Line to Zhirinovskiy means that anyone who wants to talk on air with Mr. Zhirinovskiy can send a postcard to the radio station indicating his telephone number.

Here is another quotation: **"For people weighed down by constant problems who find themselves continually depressed owing to their unbearably difficult way of life, we propose the 'Russian Dream' propaganda program. Analogous to the American version, the Russian dream means faith in one's future, a strong country, prosperity for one's children, peaceful twilight years, stability, and security. Studio guests will include people who have made something of themselves and overcome a host of problems."** Most of the station's broadcasting time, according to the authors' plan, will be made up of patriotic music from all eras.

This is no joke. As far as I can tell, negotiations are already under way with two radio stations—"Avto-radio" and "Vozrozhdeniye." It is planned to broadcast between 1900 hours and 0400 hours, presumably starting this March or April.

And so to the second document. "The 'Zhirinovskiy Nighttime' Youth Club." Its founders believe that **"the club's name will give rise to plenty of jokes regarding its activities,**

but the parties we intend to hold will always differ from those in other night clubs by their marked accessibility, immediacy, and quality program." So what are Zhirinovskiy's clowns planning? "While primarily intended for a youthful audience, the club will also enable us to hold parties for disabled people and pensioners, organize programs devoted to a particular event, or simply invite deputies from a particular faction to celebrate their leader's birthday."

The night club also plans free lunches for pensioners, performances by artistes for the residents of children's homes, and meetings with the press.

One can of course make fun of the unwieldiness of the plans put forward by Zhirinovskiy's supporters. It is possible to do so. Only we should remember the background against which all this is taking place.

Meanwhile in over 30 Russian cities television programming has been cut back exclusively to news broadcasts, since both Russian Television and "Ostankino" owe the Ministry of Communications approximately 80 billion rubles. Moreover, the Ministry of Finance has halved Russian Television's budget, and now Russian Television has been forced to halve its programming.

At the same time, in accordance with an instruction by government apparatus leader Vladimir Kvasov, even news agency and television correspondents are not being admitted to government sessions for the first time in two years. The explanation looks like a joke that has fallen flat—we are being told that the sessions are a "working process, and therefore only mass media accredited to the Council of Ministers may attend the sessions, namely ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA and the government newspapers."

In my opinion we are already witnessing a trend whereby the numerous press services, which were originally designed to impart as much information as possible about their department's work to the press and hence to society, are turning into a press whose purpose is to squeeze journalists out of the corridors of state structures. I am not even going to mention the country's top leaders. An acquaintance of mine shudders whenever he catches a speech by the president on television. Well, here is Yeltsin telling us about his edict which will stir up the entire country, he comments.

Of all Russia's politicians, Vladimir Volfovich is virtually the only one who converses with the people. He travels around the country, around our country, moreover, not America or Switzerland. He directs his appeals to specific groups of voters. He knows what he wants. I have no doubt that Zhirinovskiy will be our next president.

So what will you do then, Messrs. Democrats? Absolutely nothing. You seem to be implying that life will be awful if Comrade Zyukin comes to power.

Comrade Zyukin has already arrived. But he does not wear a sober suit from the "Bolshevik" factory, nor does he go around with a long face. Comrade Zyukin wears denims and listens to rap music. While you preserve a haughty silence, he is running a disco.

I can only hope that our people are more intelligent en masse than any one politician or minister. They may be able to see exactly what Comrade Zyukin represents. But you democrats, if you have learned nothing since 12 December, will never learn anything at all.

Yeltsin Edict Modifies Statutes on Elections

PM1502150994 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 15 Feb 94 First Edition p 3

["Edict No. 238 of the Russian Federation President on Additional Guarantees of the Rights of Russian Federation Citizens To Participate in the Administration of State Affairs," signed by Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin in the Kremlim in Moscow on 4 February 1994]

[Text] With the aim of creating additional guarantees for representative people's power and fuller realization of the rights of Russian citizens to participate in the administration of state affairs through elections to the organs of Russian Federation state power, I decree:

1. That the words "for a period of no more than 12 weeks" are to be deleted from Article 20 Point 7 of the Statute on Elections of Deputies to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council in 1993, ratified by edict No. 1626 of the Russian Federation president of 11 October 1993 "On Elections to the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Federation Council" (Collected Acts of the Russian Federation President and Government 1993 No. 42, page 3994; No. 45, page 4333).

2. That the words "for 12 weeks" are to be deleted from Article 24 point 6 of the Statute on the Election of State Duma Deputies in 1993, ratified by edict No. 1557 of the Russian Federation president of 1 October 1993 "On the Ratification of the Edited Version of the Statute on the Election of State Duma Deputies in 1993 and on Amendments and Additions to the Statute on the Federal Organs of Power in the Transitional Period" (Collected Acts of the Russian Federation President and Government 1993, No. 41, page 3907; No. 45, page 4333).

3. In the event of new or additional elections being held in individual electoral districts for election to the Soviet Federation or to the Federal Assembly State Duma the date of the elections is to be set independently by the Russian Federation Central Electoral Commission.

[Signed] Russian Federation President B. Yeltsin
[Dated] 4 February 1994 Moscow, the Kremlin
No. 238

'Party of the Majority' Outlines Stance, Aims

LD1502191994 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1413 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] A constituent congress of the Party of the Majority took place in Moscow Tuesday.

The Party's chairman Vyacheslav Grechnev told the congress delegates that the Party is being forced to protect the interests of the Russian middle class: representatives of the creative intellectuals, of small and medium businessmen, of youth, war and labor veterans, that is of the majority of Russia's population.

The party is needed, said Grechnev, because the country faces the threat of annihilating a vital stratum of society. Russia is threatened by the prospect of becoming a country of the proletariat.

Speakers said that the party was conservative and against radicalism of any form.

The Party sees as its allies any political forces in the country are oriented around the priority of the state being the guarantor of freedom, the rights and dignity of its citizens.

Grechnev said that during the next parliamentary elections the Party expects not simply to win seats in parliament, but to form a majority in it.

The Party of the Majority has its representatives in 50 Russian regions, said its leader.

Moscow Mayor Yuriy Luzhkov sent a message of greetings to the delegates.

Observers believe that the Party considers the possibility of nominating Luzhkov for presidency during the 1996 elections.

Tight Security at Party Congress

LD1502175594 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1516 GMT 15 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Lyudmila Aleksandrova]

[Text] Moscow February 15 TASS—The politial face of the New Majority Party, whose congress is now under way in Moscow, can hardly be determined right away. There are no eminent politicians among its organisers. It claims to represent the interests of the middle class. But this is now done by practically all the political organisations of Russia.

However, representatives of the leadership of the Democratic Party of Russia, attending the congress as observers, believe that the party is being set up for Yuriy Luzhkov, the mayor of Moscow. In their opinion, this is borne out, among other things, by the presence of representatives from the Moscow and regional elites (no journalists were allowed to the congress hall). Indicative also is the fact that the congress was opened by a message of greetings from the mayor of Moscow. In the opinion of representatives of the Democratic Party of Russia Yuriy Luzhkov is thereby making his first preparations for the next presidential elections.

Asked by ITAR-TASS, assistant head of the Russian president's administration Igor Kharichev, who was invited to the congress as guest, said he had wary feeling about the new party.

The proceedings of the congress show that the delegates are disinterested in such documents as procedural rules or party charter. The selftame representatives of the Democratic Party of Russia believe that regional businessmen have gathered in Moscow to settle their financial problems and that they are not very much inclined to set up a new party.

Judging by the scope of the congress's organisation, the initiators of the party obviously have much money at their disposal. Quite staggering is the huge number of men from the party's security service. Everybody is searched with the help of metal-detectors. The cultural centre of the RIA-NOVISTI news agency, where the congress is being held, is full of security guards equipped with walkie-talkies. None of the party's organisers were able to explain why such a strict police regime was needed at a congress of a political party.

Economic Issues

New Edict Addresses Fuel Payment Delays

LD1502163994 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1348 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Russian Minister for Fuel and Energy Yuriy Shafranik visiting the Kuzbas coal region, said Tuesday while meeting in the city of Kemerovo with leaders of fuel and energy businesses and heads of the Siberian regions, that the authorities would take effective measures to pay for the fuel already supplied.

The minister said that soon this problem of the Russian economy will be solved with the help of the presidential decree "On Responsibility for Payment Delays." Shafranik said that the draft decree envisages responsibility, even criminal, to be born by the leaders of businesses for non-payments.

The minister said that Siberian enterprises have lower rates of decline in production than those elsewhere in Russia (7% against 17% over Russia). Currently 60 Mn tons of unrequired coal have amassed in Siberia.

Speakers at the conference also talked abcut a program forseeing the closure of loss-making pits and about the creation of a bank for servicing the fuel and energy complex.

Gerashenko Interviewed on Central Bank, Reforms

LD1002234494 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1308 GMT 10 Feb 94

["Exclusive" report]

[Text] RUSSIA'S ECONOMIC REFORMS COME 12 YEARS LATE, GERASHENKO

56-year-old Viktor Gerashenko worked his way from a rank and file accountant of the former USSR State Bank to the post of President of the Central Bank of Russia in 1992 and becoming a government member in the same year.. He also held foreign postings as director of the Moscow Narodny Bank's branches in London, Lebanon, West Germany and Singapore. The CBR has come under increased attacks for its inflationary policies by the finance ministry, leading economists and newspapers alike. In an interview with Interfax, Gerashenko was trying to rebuff those accusations.

IF [Interfax]: What sort of a relationship will there be between the Central Bank and the finance ministry following Boris Fedorov's resignation?

GERASHENKO: To begin with, relations between the State Bank, the Central Bank and Finance Ministry have always been business-like at all levels. I do not think there was anything unusual in my relations with the former finance minister as far as cooperation between the two departments is concerned. The Bank of Russia has never tried to put a spoke in anyone's wheel. On the contrary, we met with senior Finance Ministry officials at the end of last year to stabilize money supply.

As for the differences we had, this must be seen as a normal thing in any country with a compounded economic, social and political situation. The fact that this should have been leaked to the press or become the subject of formal and informal conversations is not our own fault.

As for Acting Finance Minister Sergey Dubinin, he is a newcomer in the ministry but I have known him as deputy chairman of the state committee for CIS economic cooperation. I know him as pragmatist who has always looked for optimal solutions to any deadlock relating to the country's economic situation and the need to use austerity measures in budgetary or crediting policies. We have never had any major differences. I met Dubinin more often than the minister himself, so I can see no problems ahead.

IF: What are the main parameters of the budget for the first quarter of this year?

GERASHENKO: There are none so far. The finance ministry has been working hard in the past three weeks to try to cut spending and find new sources of revenues. Its task is to try to bring in whatever resources there are in the country but economic methods must be used to do so. The ministry also faces the task of resorting as less as possible to the CBR's emissions mechanism which may cover any outstanding expenditure but step up inflationary processes.

IF: During a recent visit to Orel (Central Russia) together with the Prime Minister, you mentioned about Rbl 4 Tn worth of "free money" accumulated by the commercial banks. Will the government try to bring it into play, do you think?

GERASHENKO: This can be done only on a voluntary basis. In fact, commercial banks are in need of incentives to invest into the vital sectors if the economy is to survive as a whole. These include tax benefits or interest rate subsidies. With the interest rate such as it is now, there can be no question of investments. What is needed is full confidence that the government economic policy approved by parliament will ensure support to key sectors such as energy, transport and housing construction. That is, investments by the commercial banks must to an extent be guaranteed by the country's economic policy itself.

A clear signal must be sent to the private sector that the government has serious plans of developing a securities market, especially government bonds. Similar bonds can be issued by first rate companies involved in key sectors designed to ensure the country's survival. A commercial bank must be assured that government or company securities can help it survive in the event of liquidity with the help from the Central Bank. The CBR must, as it were, promise to play the role of a secondary market. But this is something unknown in this country, so the details will have to be worked out together with IMF experts.

IF: What do make of media allegations saying the key reformists were dropped out of the cabinet following last month's government reshuffle?

GERASHENKO: I do not hold with such assertions at all because the need for government reforms arose back in the mid- 1970s when most of its members must have been post graduates. Unfortunately, the then government was not ready for such reforms which were delayed for 12 years at least. In fact, the policy of reforms started in 1987 and the main dispute is about methods and timing rather than strategic goals.

I cannot say the government has been reformed. The cabinet was trimmed down, especially in the number of Vice-Premiers, on a proposal from Boris Fedorov himself. Generally speaking, I think Gaydar and Fedorov resigned for entirely different reasons though using a similar smokescreen.

IF: In his speech at Orel, Chernomyrdin made it clear the Rbl 4 Tn debt to the defence and farming sectors would have to be repaid. In what way is this likely to affect the budget?

GERASHENKO: This is something that Russia's freedom loving press is reluctant to write about. The huge debt owed to the defence and farming sectors is left over by the finance ministry last year. This also includes salaries to the non-industrial sector comprising teachers, physicians, the army, the police and so on. Such things must be taken very seriously. I think that as a good professional, Boris Fyodorov is well aware of the difficulties facing the country in the first quarter of this year and throughout 1994 as a whole. I think Fedorov is partly trying to pull off a face-saving exercise.

IF: But the Rbl 4 Tn debt will have to be repaid after all.

GERASHENKO: The question is how to extend the schedule of repayment. Some of the debt will have to be repaid now to help to break the chain of mass defaults and raise some revenues. But the rest of it will have to be suspended to avert excessive money supply in the first quarter of the year. This is a formidable task.

The CBR is in search of new ways to break the deadlock including the issue of securities or orientating the resources of all sorts of funds. Regrettably, the existing legislation does not provide for such eventualities apart from distributing credits among commercial structures. In the meantime, their resources are at risk because of a certain threat of bankruptcy.

Military Issues

Chief of General Staff Denies Resignation Reports

LD1502152694 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1443 GMT 15 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Gondusov]

[Text] Moscow, February 15 (TASS)—Chief of the General Staff of the Russian Armed Forces Colonel-General Mikhail Kolesnikov described as falsehoods reports of a number of the media that he had sent in a resignation to the Russian president.

Kolesnikov said these abominable publications are aimed at splitting the leadership of the Defence Ministry and thus weakening one of the most stable institutions of the state—the armed forces.

In his statement for the press circulated by the Information and Press Agency of the Defence Ministry, the chief of the General Staff said no secret is made of the work of the Defence Ministry. Its work can always be discussed in an open and constructive way. Representatives of the media are informed of every important function of the Defence Ministry or of the General Staff. Those who are really interested in getting reliable information about the armed forces have every opportunity to receive this information, the statement says.

Voices 'Disgust' at Reports

PM1602093194 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 16 Feb 94 p 1

[Russian Defense Ministry Press and Information Directorate report: "Chief of the General Staff Has Not Handed In His Resignation"]

[Text] Yesterday's announcement by a number of mass media that Colonel General Mikhail Kolesnikov, chief of the Russian Armed Forces General Staff, has allegedly written out his resignation and sent it to the Russian president does not accord with reality.

Here is what Mikhail Kolesnikov himself said about the report of his resignation:

"This is another fabrication. The purpose of such articles, in my view, is to sow mutual enmity, force a split within the leadership of the Defense Ministry, and thus weaken one of the most stable of state institutions—the Russian Armed Forces. These articles personally do no more than disgust me. This is all the more unpleasant since we have established good businesslike relations with many mass media.

"I would like to appeal to mass media leaders and journalists. We are open, we are always ready for frank, constructive discussion. We do not make a secret of our plans or the state of the Armed Forces, we do not make a secret of our work. Journalists are frequent visitors to us. Not a single function of public importance takes place at the Defense Ministry or the General Staff without representatives of the mass media being involved. So those people who are really interested in obtaining reliable information about the Armed Forces have every opportunity to do so."

Rumor Seen Prelude to Shakeup

MK1602120094 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 16 Feb 94 p 3

[Ilya Bulavinov report: "Rumors of General Staff Chief Resignation. Gen. Kolesnikov Has Not Resigned"]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] Observers do not rule out that the rumors of Mikhail Kolesnikov's resignation have a connection with the intentions of the presidential entourage to go ahead with the so far postponed reorganization of the military agency envisioning the transfer of some of the defense minister's functions to the General Staff chief. In this event, the head of state would like to have a different general filling the position of General Staff chief, who will be subordinated directly to the president. Besides, news of differences among the top command may help discredit the military agency, thus providing an opportunity to reorganize the Defense Ministry and carry through shakeups there even despite the resistance of Pavel Grachev, whose relations with Boris Yeltsin have clearly soured of late.

Kolesnikov Against Radical Reform

MK1602094094 Moscow MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI in Russian No. 7, 13-20 Feb 94 (Signed to press 15 Feb) p A1

[Aleksandr Zhilin, MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI military observer, report: "Fine Gesture, or General Staff Chief's Resignation?"]

[Text] The rumor that Colonel General Mikhail Kolesnikov, chief of the Russian Federation Armed Forces General Staff, allegedly presented his separation request to the president went around Moscow last Friday. On Tuesday, a Moscow newspaper reported it as a fait accompli, which caused confusion at the Defense Ministry.

The Defense Ministry's press center has flatly denied the information, calling it a provocation. What has actually happened?

MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI has learned form sources close to the president that Defense Ministry chiefs have long had differences of views, particularly on how military reform should be carried out. Far from all generals support Pavel Grachev's stance on the matter. As a result, two camps have emerged in the ministry leadership, both with their own doctrines of military organization. As with Grachev's other opponents, Gen. Kolesnikov is not a proponent of radical reform.

According to officials from the Defense Ministry central staff, this stance has annoyed Pavel Grachev. Recently, appointments to high posts at the General Staff were made without Kolesnikov's consent. Other "working incidents" have also been reported. Small wonder that the other day Kolesnikov said in an outburst of emotion that if his opinion was not heeded, he was ready to resign. It cannot be ruled out that military bureaucrats interested in such a turn of events have deliberately leaked the information to the press, adding by themselves a finishing touch: Gen. Kolesnikov's separation request is already sitting on Yeltsin's table.

Still, the source told MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI, it is possible that there may indeed be only one step from an oral statement to a written request. It is believed, however, that Boris Yeltsin is unlikely to accept the resignation, because he sees Kolesnikov as "a mighty counterweight to extreme reformers."

Come what may, Mikhail Kolesnikov has said in public that he is not going to resign and that he is fully intent on honestly performing his duties.

Defense Ministry Begins Paying Military Debts

LD1602123994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1155 GMT 16 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Anatoliy Yurkin]

[Text] Moscow February 16 TASS—The Russian Defence Ministry will pay this year debts to suppliers of weapons and combat materiel, totalling 2,200 billion roubles.

It has already paid out 46 per cent of debts, Colonel-General Vassiliy Vorobyev, head of the chief administration of the military budget and financing, said at a news conference at the Defence Ministry on Wednesday.

Asked by ITAR-TASS about reasons for payment delays, Vorobyev said that the military budget for the last year was approved at 8,300 billion roubles. However, the Finance Ministry transferred only 6,500 billion to the Defence Ministry.

The ministry's minimum needs are over 10,000 billion. The Finance Ministry satisfied only 65 per cent of the needs. This is the explanation for debts and delays with payment of money allowances and wages.

The colonel-general did not say anything about the ministry's solvency this year. Vorobyev noted that everything would depend on the federal budget which will be examined by parliament in the near future.

Provision is made for some increase in appropriations for purchasing weapons and combat materiel as well as for research and development.

According to Vorovyev's forecast, the practice of saving on all the spheres of army and naval activities will be continued this year.

Military Brass Reshuffle Will Have 'Political' Basis

PM1602111994 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 15 Feb 94 p 2

[Igor Chernyak "Military Review": "The 'Infantry Fighting Vehicle' of Political Support"]

[Text] Sources in Russia's military department inform us that, despite calls to depoliticize the Russian Federation Armed Forces, its personnel, and particularly its officer corps, politicization is continuing, moreover the process is developing in a direction which, to put it mildly, is not always what the president, government, and Ministry of Defense leadership would expect. This trend is even typical of the General Staff apparatus.

The military department leadership is looking for ways to stabilize the situation. One of the methods being planned is to carry out a major reshuffle of the Russian Federation Armed Forces leadership and appoint to key positions military commanders of proven loyalty. Among the candidates slated for replacement are a number of generals ranging from commanders in chief of branches of the services to Ground Forces Aviation Commander Vitaliy Pavlov, who refused to execute an order to open rocket fire on the White House. The presidential administration is in turn formulating plans to establish a special structure to ensure more effective control over the state of cadre work in the Army—a kind of CPSU Central Committee Administrative Organs Department.

Special efforts are being made by the defense minister to bring about the transfer to Moscow of Western Group of Forces Commander M.P. Burlakov, nicknamed by his subordinates the infantry fighting vehicle. It is expected that Burlakov will give a considerable boost to the Army's "reformist wing." It is not being ruled out that he will be considered as a candidate either for chief of the General Staff (together with Andrey Nikolayev, current commander in chief of the Border Guards, who is less acceptable to Grachev) or commander of the key Moscow Military District. Our sources in the General Staff claim that the firm opinion has formed at the highest level that, following the events of 3-4 October, current Chief of the General Staff M. Kolesnikov and Moscow Military District Commander L. Kuznetsov cannot be completely relied on. Burlakov's uncommon political flexibility works in his favor, of course: He was one of the first to support the State Committee for the State of Emergency, but shortly afterward he roundly condemned D. Yazov and his supporters.

However, it cannot be ruled out that this flexibility could give rise to doubts among the president's more sober-minded supporters: The fact that Burlakov was the only commander at P. Grachev's October conference who enthusiastically approved the results of the storming of the White House counts for nothing. There is also some perplexity surrounding the actions of the Western Group of Forces commander (including the fact that Burlakov flew to the wedding of Defense Minister Grachev's son and presented the newlyweds with the keys to a new Mercedes), not to mention the overall situation in the Western Group of Forces. In the opinion of military men, the favorable reports brought back by a group of journalists sent out to Germany on P. Grachev's instructions were bound to be convincing, but in order to be absolutely sure it might also be useful to publish the results of an investigation into the Western Group of Forces and Burlakov personally that was conducted before last October by the military prosecutor's office and military counterintelligence.

Army Interests in Local Elections Viewed

PM1602102994 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 15 Feb 94 p 1

[Vladimir Yermolin article: "Elections to Local Organs of Power: For Whom Will We Vote This Time"]

[Text] Last week the Federal Assembly State Duma determined its attitude toward elections to representative organs in Federation components and organs of local self-government. It was acknowledged that not everything is going smoothly and within the framework of the Constitution, and so the president was asked to take steps "to eliminate the breaches of citizens' electoral rights and the rights of local self-government committed in the legal acts of Russian Federation components."

What is at issue here? An explanatory note circulated among deputies says in particular that "on the whole the elections in the regions are rapidly gaining momentum." However, I would remind you that each region has set the date of its ballot autonomously. According to the president's edict of 26 October 1993, June is the deadline for the elections, and 64 regions have decided to hold their elections in March. Karelia, Sverdlovsk Oblast, and Chukotka are voting in April, while Dagestan, Chelyabinsk and Saratov Oblasts, and Krasnodar Kray are doing so in July [month as published]. And several regions (Adygea, Bashkortostan, Buryatia, Kalmykia, Komi, Tatarstan, and Khakassia) have still not made up their mind about elections.

But the range of dates is not the most terrible sin committed by the Federation components. Parliamentary lawyers have observed constitutional violations with regard to citizens' rights to equal representation in organs of state power (in Krasnodar Kray and Tver and Perm Oblasts), the restriction of the electoral rights of certain groups of citizens in St. Petersburg, the removal of elections from public control (in most regions), and other unofficial constitutional "amendments."

As expected, there have been doubts in some areas as to the advisability of servicemen on compulsory service voting (in St. Petersburg and Murmansk Oblast). The logic here is as follows: Why should someone temporarily living in our area interfere in local affairs? And there is also the unvoiced but real idea that in certain circumstances the disciplined military electorate will be able to supply a sizable influx of votes to the candidate who appeals to...the command. The desire to exclude as many servicemen as possible from the elections is due also to democrat leaders' fear that the Army will vote for representatives of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia and the Communists. The well known saying that "one-third of the Armed Forces voted for Zhirinovskiy"—although repeatedly debunked by specialists who have specific figures at their disposal and, most importantly, study the Army on a professional basis—still features in publications, surfaces at political rallies, and alarms the timid section of the Russian public. Leaving aside the citizen's unconditional right to hold any beliefs and express them in elections, let us not nonetheless denigrate the Army by reducing its natural diversity of thinking to a common denominator. The processes of analyzing and reanalyzing reality are just as complex in the Armed Forces today as they are throughout society. Attempts to "bar" the Army from the ballot box only reveal the frailty of the local authorities, who rely not on the might of their prestige among the people, but solely on the force of administrative levers. And, finally, one last point: Since we have decided to love the Constitution this time, let us remember Article 32, which speaks without any reservation about the Russian citizen's right to elect and be elected to organs of state power.

As for draft service, there may in the future be grounds for studying the experience of certain countries where a serviceman taken away from home for a year or two is sent a ballot paper from his native city (village) and thus participates in creating local self-government bodies.

The following question is a rhetorical one: Does the Army have its own interest in these elections? Any commander today will confirm that his subordinates' lives and living conditions depend to a considerable extent on how aware the local authority is of army problems. Rayon-scale politics can mean that the local population sees these "warriors" as spongers who also occupy the best land. And the whole life support system of the regiment, the division, etc., is obstructed with red tape, chicanery, and demagoguery. Needless to say, the worst-case scenarios come to mind. But even run-of-the-mill "misunderstandings" between the command and the local authorities over housing questions can completely ruin the lives of the defenders of the Fatherland. Admittedly, to be fair, I must point out that there are still more examples of the military and the authorities living in harmony in the localities than the opposite.

It cannot be denied that ideally the military should deal with strictly military business, while the civilian authorities should do all they can to ensure that the military lead a normal life. And there would be no need for a regiment commander to besiege self-government organs and keep

vigil to see whether they are not about to violate the interests of the several hundred men in his charge. But things are not ideal at the moment. And so a local citizen who is a true friend of the Army, if not a military man, will invariably have servicemen's vote. They have their own interests, they should have their own man. I repeat, he can be a man of any profession at all, but essentially someone who necessarily possesses one quality—awareness of how much Russia needs a strong, determined, self-confident Army today. And a stubborn organ of self-government afflicted with primitive pacifism will quite easily develop in a troop unit a cadging complex, a feeling of being a poor relation. We must take care to ensure that this does not happen now, when elections are taking place.

Federal Assembly

Bosnian Air Strikes Termed 'International Terrorism'

LD1502181194 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1413 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] A resolution adopted by the Duma Geopolitics Committee says that the world public demands non-interference into the affairs of the republics of the former Yugoslavia.

The committee held hearings Tuesday on the possible escalation of the conflict in the former Yugoslavia. The restoration of a single democratic state is the sole way to discontinue the military, political, economic and inter-ethnic crisis in the republics of the former Yugoslavia, says the resolution.

The document says that the implementation of a NATO decision on air strike against the Serb positions near Sarajevo should be considered as an act of international terrorism.

The Russian president is proposed to use his right of veto at the UN Security Council, as well as lift economic sanctions, imposed by Russia against Yugoslavia.

Representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry, Vladimir Ivanovskiy, told deputies that the UN resolution on Yugoslavia puts responsibility for unblocking Sarajevo on the UN Secretary General and it is not necessary to convene the Security Council to take decision on air raids. This means that the use by Russia of its right to veto could be discussed only "hypothetically", he said. The UN resolution, said Ivanovskiy, allows the use of the military force only if there is threat to the safety zones, including Sarajevo, and to the relief convoys and UN peacekeepers.

Federation Council Session To Open 25 Feb

LD1602111094 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0905 GMT 16 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Lyudmila Yermakova]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Feb—The third session of the Federation Council is to open on 25 February and not the 18th as was announced earlier, the ITAR-TASS correspondent was told at the chamber's office. This is due to the postponement of the parliamentary address of the president of the Russian Federation.

We remind you, that the majority of the deputies to the upper chamber of the Federal Assembly, working on a non-permanent basis, are now in the regions where they are carrying out their permanent duties. They will gather in Moscow on 24 February, to hear Boris Yeltsin's message together with the deputies of the State Duma.

Two Deputies Resign From Zhirinovskiy's Faction

LD1602110494 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0932 GMT 16 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS parliamentary correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow February 16 TASS—Viktor Kobelev and Aleksandr Pronin, members of the State Duma (lower house of the Russian parliament), left Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's parliamentary faction.

They said about their move at the Duma's parliamentary session on Wednesday, requesting to circulate their statement on reasons for the withdrawal.

In turn, faction leader Zhirinovskiy said that legislators Kovelev and Pronin were expelled from the Liberal Democratic Party and the federal list of lawmakers from the LDP.

He added that criminal cases will be instituted against the two legislators in question. However, Zhirinovskiy did not specify their supposed crimes.

Duma Committee Head Lukin Discusses Foreign Policy

MK1502112094 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 15 Feb 94 p 4

[Aleksandr Koretskiy report: "The Committee Head Opposes 'Airfield Diplomacy'"]

[Text] Vladimir Lukin, newly elected chairman of the State Duma's international affairs committee, completed the transfer of his duties in the Russian Embassy in the United States and on Monday got down to the business of being a deputy. The extent to which the committee head is critical of the Russian Foreign Affairs Ministry can be seen from his interview given to KOMMERSANT-DAILY's correspondent in which Mr. Lukin has apparently skipped none of the topical foreign policy issues.

Assessing the performance by the Foreign Affairs Ministry over the recent period, Vladimir Lukin stressed that compared to 1992, the foreign policy department has begun to work better. Diplomats have begun gradually to find their own identity, and talk with their partners more actively,

professionally, and independently. Yet many weaknesses have remained. The main one among them is that so far there is more showing-off and pretentiousness than real activity. At the same time Mr. Lukin noted that there are enough professionals in the Foreign Affairs Ministry who are doing real business. Their efforts so far, however, are not sufficiently coordinated, while the ostentatious "airfield" ["aerodromnaya"] diplomacy remains the ministry's prevailing style.

The committee chairman intends to change this style by accessible and legitimate methods: hearings, consultations, and parliamentary debates on Russia's international treaties. Mr. Lukin also plans to transfer to Russian soil the experience of the United States, where candidates for responsible posts have to pass congressional hearings while the president is obligated to take the lawmakers' decision into account.

Touching on the issue of protection of Russia's economic interests as part of its foreign policy, the committee chairman expressed his certainty that the main thing here is not to engage in ideology, but to count money. For instance, in concluding the "Indian" deal, it was necessary to count how much would be gained and how much lost, also considering that the space agreement with the United States in that event would be impossible. The opinion that Russia is in no position now to maintain its space complex took the upper hand. But the agreement with India was not canceled either. According to Mr. Lukin, thereby Moscow killed two birds with one stone.

Russia's support of sanctions against Libya, Iraq, and Yugoslavia was quite warranted. But Russia has had to pay a higher price for that than anybody else. The committee chairman is determined, with Duma assistance, to change the situation where "some people dance, while others get paid." Incidentally, he thinks that Iraq is essentially observing the UN resolutions, and the question about alleviating the sanctions against it has now grown urgent. As for the situation in Yugoslavia, it is vital to avoid a double standard approach here: As soon as it comes to the Serbs, sanctions are used against them; but when the Croats are involved, the FRG and other countries oppose it: "Yet both are guilty to approximately the same extent."

The most acute problem today, according to Mr. Lukin, is the situation of Russian-speakers in the former USSR. Here, the head of the Duma committee intends to do everything "to make sure that these people can either live normally outside Russia or come here, with dignity." The Foreign Affairs Ministry has been reacting too slowly to this problem: "Its leadership resisted even when the problem was literally pushed under the ministry's nose." Now the Foreign Ministry is paying lip service to it. The problem with Russophones in the Baltics can, in his opinion, be resolved in a very simple way: "Speak softly but carry what has to be carried in your hands. There is no need to keep saying that we shall not withdraw the troops, but this can actually be done while smiling nicely and gently."

As for integration within the CIS framework, some form of unification, according to Mr. Lukin, is historically inevitable. He favors a gradual and soft form of association, economic interdependence, and a single cultural space. Russia should find such a formula for integration whereby it would pay less (although it will have to pay in any event). "As to who will be the little king in what area, I could not care less," Mr. Lukin said. Touching on the territorial problems that can arise in the former USSR owing to the aspirations by, for instance, Crimea, South Ossetia, or the Dniestr Republic to join Russia, Mr. Lukin recalled the story of Shura Balaganov [a character in the novel "The Golden Calf" by Ilf and Petrov] who, having received a thousand rubles, picked someone's pocket for a three-ruble bill. He was caught and everything he had was taken away from him. Russia must not follow these rules. On the issue of the Kuril islands, the committee head advised to remember the wise Deng Xiaoping, who once said about a territorial dispute with Japan: A compromise needs to be sought, but if this proves impossible, our children will be wiser than us.

Commentary by the international department

The news about Vladimir Lukin's appointment as head of the Duma committee has been received negatively on Smolenskaya Square [Foreign Ministry], to put it mildly. People there would have preferred to see Anatoliy Adamishin in this capacity. Now Andrey Kozyrev has an active and influential opponent in the Duma: Lukin is known not only as a critic of Foreign Ministry policy as a whole, but also as a person who has a "difficult" personal relationship with this department's head. Lukin has never made any secret of this and while ambassador to the United States, he approached the president directly, bypassing the Foreign Ministry hierarchy. Signs are that Lukin's relations with the Foreign Ministry on a number of issues will be even more acute than under Yevgeniy Ambartsumov, who headed a corresponding committee in the Russian Supreme Soviet. The situation in the Duma is objectively conducive to this: The mood in the chamber is often marked by a sharpened feeling of patriotism understood in its own peculiar way. In this light the conflict in the former Yugoslavia could become a subject of foreign policy debates. The point about "gentle smiling" on the issue of troop withdrawal from the Baltics apparently contains a serious problem.

Now Vladimir Lukin is trying to put himself across as a man of business. It can be supposed that even with the outward similarity of his conceptual positions with those of the Foreign Ministry (the interview gives reason for that), Lukin will try to use his present position as a springboard for the ministerial post.

Panel on Oct Events Seen As Anti-Yeltsin Ploy

PM1602115594 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 15 Feb 94 First Edition p 1

[Robert Minasov report under "In the State Duma" rubric: "What Sort of Commission Is This, Creator?"]

[Text] As is well known, at S. Baburin's suggestion a majority of State Duma members included on the agenda the question of forming a parliamentary commission to investigate the causes and circumstances of the events of September-October last year. This was despite the perfectly reasonable argument that an official investigation is being conducted.

"How do you explain your persistence in forming the commission," I asked Baburin.

"We must call a spade a spade," he said. "There have been many mutually exclusive political statements on this subject, so deputies have agreed to investigate what's what themselves. People are saying that Yeltsin was defending the constitution in September-October last year, while most Russians hold the opposite opinion, as they confirmed in the 12 December elections."

It seems that Baburin is deliberately exaggerating the election results while completely ignoring another result of 12 December—the referendum on the draft constitution, which was proposed by the presidential side and supported by Russians.

Let us turn to another State Duma deputy—Pavel Bunich. What does he think about the inclusion of the item about forming a parliamentary commission on the agenda of the lower house's plenary session?

"Dangerous tendencies are increasing in the State Duma. For example, one can sense a predisposition toward the controversial program of the Russian Academy of Sciences Economics Department and Reform Foundation, which essentially returns us to a command-distributive system. This could 'galvanize' the government and incline it toward implementing this doubtful program.

"As regards the formation of a parliamentary commission to investigate the causes and circumstances of the events of September-October 1993, it is an attempt to provoke a conflict with the president and General Prosecutor's Office. Baburin and his supporters are using this commission to try to achieve a global aim—to prove that the president's actions were anticonstitutional and consequently that it is time to oust him."

Duma Approves Draft Law on Media Coverage

LD1502202194 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1630 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] At a sitting of Russia's State Duma today, the Committee for Information Policy and Communications approved a draft law on media coverage of State Duma proceedings. It has been proposed that a special press service be set up to prepare television and radio programs using the equipment and studios of Russian TV Parliament.

Duma Chairman Stresses Need for Calm, Cooperation

PM1502141094 Copenhagen BERLINGSKE TIDENDE in Danish 14 Feb 94 p 7

[Report on interview with Duma Speaker Ivan Rybkin by Flemming Rose in Moscow; date not given]

[Text] Moscow—On 4 October last year the then leader of the parliamentary group of Russia's communists, Ivan Rybkin, was sitting in the Supreme Soviet when President Boris Yeltsin gave order to bomb the building. Eighteen months of bitter power struggle had brought Russia to the brink of civil war. Yeltsin and Rybkin found themselves on different sides of the barricades.

A month ago 46-year-old Ivan Rybkin was elected speaker of the Russian parliament's lower chamber and everyone expected that the seemingly convinced communist, a member of the Agrarian Party group in the State Duma, would immediately begin a campaign of revenge against his political opponent in the Kremlin and take every opportunity to make life difficult for Yeltsin.

However, the reverse has happened. Most surprisingly Rybkin has defended President Yeltsin in several critical situations in the course of the first month of the new parliament. When BERLINGSKE TIDENDE spoke to Ivan Rybkin here in Moscow at the weekend it was natural to ask him about his relations with President Yeltsin.

"On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the lifting of the siege of Leningrad I stood by President Yeltsin's side in Piskarev Cemetery in St. Petersburg where almost half a million victims of the siege are buried. I saw how the tears ran down the president's cheeks and at that moment I realized that more than anything else Russia needs peace and calm and cooperation," said Rybkin, who is so busy trying to get cooperation with the government and with President Yeltsin to work that he has become unpopular among the ranks of his own party.

"The three times I have spoken to President Yeltsin the conversations have been chiefly about the need for unity in society. President Yeltsin and I are agreed that the political forces in society must be consolidated, that the country needs peace and quiet in which it can work. Without peace we cannot continue the reforms," said Rybkin who comes from the southern Russian region of Volgograd, where he trained as an engineer.

Rybkin talks so much about peace and quiet and cooperation that many people view him with deep suspicion.

"Some people would like to see us coming to blows again, but I have had the scent of civil war in my nostrils and the main point of everything that I am doing now is about preventing a repeat of the civil war which the country experienced in 1918-20."

Rybkin recalled a story by Soviet Russian author and Nobel Prize winner Mikhail Shokolov which takes place during the civil war after the revolution in 1917. Without realizing

it an elderly Bolshevik kills his own son who is fighting on the side of the White rebel forces, and when he recognizes the birthmark on his son's leg he shoots himself through the forehead.

"Russia will not survive such a confrontation again," the speaker said emphatically and a quiver in his voice.

Rybkin said of himself that today he is as much a communist as Boris Yeltsin, Mikhail Gorbachev, or Aleksandr Yakovlev. The newly elected parlaimentary speaker described his own platform as social democratic.

"Today President Yeltsin is the unifying political figure in Russia. My own party or a similar party in the center of the political spectrum could well become Yeltsin's political platform. It is here that the sympathies of the emerging middle class will lie, and it is obvious that every reformer must win the support of the middle class."

Regional Affairs

Russia, Tatarstan Sign Power-Sharing Agreement

LD1502191394 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1536 GMT 15 Feb 94

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: Reports by Diplomatic Correspondents Dmitriy Voskoboynikov, Igor Porshnev, Vitaliy Trubetskoy and others]

[Text] Presidents of Russia and Tatarstan Boris Yeltsin and Mintimer Shaymiyev met in Moscow on Tuesday to sign a power sharing agreement between Moscow and Kazan.

The agreement delineates the two sides' areas of responsibility and defines what they must run together.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Yeltsin and Shaimiyev have both pointed to the significance of the deal stressing that political and economic reforms must be based on civic peace, ethnic harmony and human rights priorities.

The treaty is based on "recognition of each other's constitutions without encroaching on their substance", Shaymiyev told Interfax on Monday.

The Tatar leader spoke of the country's need to be represented in both houses of the Federal Assembly following a power sharing agreement. "We must get involved in Russian affairs, defend the republic's interests and pursue an overall Russian policy to seek the emergence of Russia as a federal state", he said. (Tatarstan holds elections to the Federal Assembly on March 13—IF).

He said Tatarstan had never insisted on full independence calling for close bonds with Russia instead.

Shaymiyev says Tatarstan has managed to cushion off the effects of shock treatment of the economy and somewhat halt production slump due to the government's economic policy. He says that despite difficulties, Russia has the chance of turning into an advanced state if it goes ahead with reforms and makes less political and economic mistakes.

For his part, Minister for Nationalities and Regional Policy Sergey Shakhray who drafted the paper described it as "a substantial breakthrough in the promotion of federal relations". In an interview with Interfax, he said that "for Russia, a federal structure is the only way of retaining the country's integrity and does not amount to a weakening of the state".

He said that neither the federal constitution nor Russian laws had been effective in Tatarstan for the past three years adding this could have led to a political crisis if allowed to persist.

Shakhray says that a new way of preparing documents has helped towards a success in bilateral talks. "We moved from concrete agreements to drafting an outline treaty. This helped not only flesh out the document but also mechanisms of enforcing it", he said. Shakhray thinks the new method will also enable to strike a similar deal with the Chechen republic though it will be different from that signed with Kazan.

The political effect of the treaty is Tatarstan's agreement to take part in elections to the Federal Assembly "which amounts to the republic's recognition of the Russian Federation's sovereignty, laws and constitution", he said.

Shakhray does not rule that other parts of the country may want to strike similar deals with the center. In his words, such a process is in line with the federal constitution which says such treaties can help towards economic and regional self-adjustment of the federation. Shakhray believes the Federal Assembly must adopt a law on power sharing as a way of regulating the process.

In his view, Tatarstan may also join parts of the federal treaty which coincide with the power sharing agreement signed on Tuesday.

Yeltsin Hails Treaty at Ceremony

LD1502145994 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1348 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Moscow, 15 Feb (ITAR-TASS)—The treaty signed today by the Russian Federation and Tatarstan shows that "dictates from the center are being replaced by mutual respect for the interests of the Russian Federation as a whole, and for each component of the federation, in particular," Boris Yeltsin said at the signing ceremony.

The president emphasized the importance of the formula arrived at during the drafting of the treaty. The treaty's preamble states that the Republic of Tatarstan is unified, as a state, with the RF by the constitution of the Russian Federation, by the constitution of the Republic of Tatarstan, and by the treaty on delimitation of responsibilities and mutual delegation of powers. The Republic of Tatarstan takes part in international relations and foreign economic activity.

"This formula," the president said, "also reflects the actual unity of the Russian state, as it exists now, and its new federal structure. It is developed on the basis of the constitution of the Russian Federation, backed up by treaty procedures, that is, by harmonization of interests."

The head of state stressed that "treaties of this kind are, basically, the sole constitutional way of removing contradictions between the Russian Federation Constitution and republican constitutions in a civilized way, without twisting anyone's arm."

"Everyone should see that this is not a conspiracy among bosses, another carve-up of powers, but a positive political and economic development," the president said.

Shakhray Calls Treaty 'Breakthrough'

LD1502200294 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1651 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Russian Nationalities and Regional Policy Minister Sergey Shakhray, who has prepared the text of the treaty on the mutual delegation of powers between Russia and Tatarstan, has called the document "a great breakthrough in development of federative relations." In his interview with Interfax he declared that "for Russia Federation [this] does not mean weakening of the state but is the sole means to preserve the nation's territorial integrity."

Shakhray pointed out that laws and Russia's Constitution have actually not acted on Tatarstan's territory over the last three years (the term during which the treaty was being developed). As he said, this situation could have led to a political crisis.

Shakhray reported that a new method to develop documents had given impetus to the success of the negotiations. "We were moving to the text of the basic treaty basing on concrete agreements. Thanks to this we managed to prepare both the document itself and mechanisms to implement it," he said. In Shakhray's opinion, this method makes it possible to sign an identical treaty with Chechnya as well. At the same time he underlined that the text of the document to be signed with Groznyy would differ from the one signed with Tatarstan.

Tatarstan's participation in the elections to Russia's Federal Assembly is the political result of the treaty, said Shakhray. "This means recognition of Russian Federation's sovereignty, its legislation, and Constitution on the part of the republic," he underlined.

Shakhray does not rule out possibility that other constituent members would wish to take the course of agreed relations with federal bodies of state power. Development of such a process, to quote Shakhray, corresponds to the country's Constitution which stipulates that economic and regional "self-tuning of the federation" should be built with the help of treaties. Shakhray also underlined that the federal parliament should adopt a decree on principles of division of objects of responsibility and authorities to regulate this process.

According to Shakhray, in the future Tatarstan may join the Federative Treaty in the field of provisions which coincide with the provisions of the treaty on division of objects of responsibility and authorities signed on Tuesday.

'Complications' Remain

MK1602110094 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 16 Feb 94 p 1

[Vladimir Todres commentary: "Federation Treaty Outlives Its Usefulness"]

[Excerpts] Both Moscow and Kazan are satisfied with the signing of the treaty between the Russian Federation and Tatarstan. The Tatar leaders rejoice that they have finally, after a three-year tug-of-war, wrenched from Moscow recognition of their independence. Boris Yeltsin is pleased that he had been able to remove from the document a clearly separatist spirit expunging the former autonomous entity's sovereignty slogans. The authorities of the other republics, components of Russia, are hoping to use the path beaten by Tatarstan. But yesterday seems to have become critical for the future of the Federation Treaty, upon which, some people some time ago were going to build "a new, stable Russian statehood." [passage omitted]

The Tatar leaders sacrificed political rhetoric for getting all the benefits in the economic sphere. It is these agreements (especially the budget agreement), rather than the treaty itself, that were the hardest to secure. The day before, the republic's premier admitted that "Boris Fedorov's departure made the entire process substantially easier."

The historic Tuesday is nevertheless fraught precisely with political complications. Its smaller consequence consists in the fact that the concluded treaty is not going to add predictability in relationships between Moscow and Kazan: Even if Tatarstan contravenes the constitution of the former autonomous entity, nobody there for this reason will alter their own Fundamental Law, by Mr. Sabirov's admission. This signifies that also still remaining is the legal basis for fresh claims (should they arise) to the federal authority. Thus, when Boris Yeltsin states that the treaty is going to be a model "of removing differences between the federal and republican constitutions," he, to put it mildly, overestimates the achievement.

Here is the greater consequence: Russia has a further 87 regions, not counting Chechnya. The new federal constitution has proclaimed them all equal. The question "If the Tatars can do it, why can't we?" is quite natural. Why should the other regional leaders swallow this treaty in silence? By the way, their kurultay—the Federation Council—already wants to consider the Russo- Tatar treaty at its session, for precisely these reasons, it seems. [passage omitted]

Tatar President on Economic Issues

PM1502172194 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 Feb 94 First Edition pp 1-2

[Interview with Mintimer Shaymiyev, president of Republic of Tatarstan, by ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikolay Sorokin; place and date not given: "Mintimer Shaymiyev: The Market Is No Hindrance to Tatarstan"]

[Text] Of all the evils of the present period Tatarstan seems to have chosen the very least: A moderate, wise policy has been adopted in the republic—to create something new while destroying as little as possible of the old. The tactic of "gently" entering the market has proved correct. With this topic I began my conversation with Mintimer Shaymiyev, president of the Republic of Tatarstan.

[Shaymiyev] We should not flatter ourselves, for negative tendencies do, unfortunately, remain: Stability has not come about in the economy, and the financial position of major commodity producers is critical. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that a natural slump has occurred in oil extraction—the fields, which have produced 2.5 billion tonnes of oil, are getting old. One-third of the oil wells are unprofitable, and many are standing idle. This and the increase in nonpyaments are creating additional difficulties: Subcontractors—petrochemical enterprises—are on the verge of coming to a halt.

[Sorokin] To this has been added the tragedy at KamAZ [Kama Truck Plant]....

[Shaymiyev] Yes, the thread breaks where it is weakest. At the most critical moment, in April 1993, the head plant—the engine plant—of the "KamAZ" Joint-Stock Company burned to the ground. By concentrating 100 heavy cranes and 10,000 workers on the site and organizing round-the-clock work according to a flextime schedule, we managed to eliminate the consequences of the tragedy in a shorter time. Construction workers cleared the debris of 90,000 tonnes of metal structures in three months. The final roofing unit was recently installed, and the engine plant will soon start working at full capacity.

At the same time I wish to speak about the fate of YelAZ [Yelabuga Motor Vehicle Plant], which is under construction. The intergovernmental agreement "On the Joint Creation of the Motor Vehicle Plant in the City of Yelabuga" was signed in Minsk last year. The proportions of the investments by the participants—Russia, Tatarstan, Ukraine, Bashkortostan, Belarus, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan—were determined. The "YelAZ-invest" interstate corporation was set up in Tatarstan for the purpose of concentrating the investors' funds for the construction project. It was planned to form the incorporation capital in full within a year. The world's major motor vehicle companies have joined in the YelAZ project. All the conditions are being created for the creation of a modern, competitive motor vehicle production facility.

[Sorokin] On the other hand, things are improving in the agro-industrial complex.

[Shaymiyev] Our general line is to give the countryside all possible support. The government has channeled from the state budget 156 billion rubles [R], or half the expenditure, into improving the land's fertility, increasing spending on reclamation, supporting seed growing and pedigree breeding, developing the food and processing industries, and constructing housing. As a result, not only has the slump in production volumes been eliminated in the countryside but an increase has also been achieved. Livestock numbers have been restored, and a record harvest for recent years was grown—23 quintals per hectare. The volume of purchases, compared with 1992, stood at 107 percent for meat and poultry, 109 percent for milk, and 104 percent for eggs. These indicators stand at 85, 94, and 99 percent respectively for Russia. This year we intend to preserve the system of procurements of the products of fields and livestock units on the basis of contracts. The restructuring of kolkhozes has begun: Kolkhoz members are being allocated a share of property and an allotment of land.

[Sorokin] Two years of hard, unpredictable reforms. What are the lessons?

[Shaymiyev] The reforms begun in 1992 have become irreversible—this is the most important result. What are the landmarks of the reforms? First, a partial price liberalization has been carried out. The abandonment of state regulation has brought inflation from a hidden state out into the open. This has made it possible to assess the state of the economy correctly at the macro level and the micro level. Consequently, management has become more efficient. Second, partial convertibility of the ruble has been introduced. Fluctuations in the ruble rate have become one of the indicators and a real tool regulating the movement of capital and, partly, the dynamics of prices. But it is a disturbing fact that inflation has acquired a stable, self-producing nature. Third, the privatization process has begun. Approximately half the property in Tatarstan has already been privatized. Plans have been approved for the privatization of 360 more enterprises with an incorporation capital of more than R500 billion. Unfortunately, small-scale privatization is lagging behind. Before the end of the year we plan to create conditions so that at least two-thirds of small cafes, cafeterias, workshops, and hairdressers find owners. The privatization of housing has begun, and a housing market is coming into being.

[Sorokin] What is a strategic area in Tatarstan's economy?

[Shaymiyev] Life has brought us to the truth that we will not emerge from the crisis without structural restructuring of the entire economy. It is an alarming fact that labor productivity has not increased but has fallen in some places since the start of the reforms. Compared with 1992, it stood at just 89 percent last year. It will be possible to overcome the monopolized economy with its cost-led mechanism and to attain a competitive level only through painstaking, long-term work. This cannot be done quickly.

The Government of Tatarstan has concluded an agreement with the "Mashinoeksport" Association on the joint implementation of 18 projects of innovation and conversion. The republic's former military plants will produce 70 kinds of new products of interest to the world market. There are positive examples. Kazan's "Terminal" Association has been entirely deprived of military orders, which a year ago made up 90 percent of its output. The enterprise has quickly started up production of domestic appliances and other products and has emerged from a complex situation without standing idle and without cutting the work force. We intend to give selective support to life-supporting sectors—the agro-industrial complex above all. It is planned to reduce oil extraction by 10 percent, while, on the other hand, production of polyethylene, rubber, bricks, foodstuffs, clothes, and furniture will increase.

[Sorokin] How is it possible to assess the social position in the republic?

[Shaymiyev] The average wage stood at R128,000 in December. In February the living wage is forecast at the level of R30,000, and we intend to increase the minimum wage to the same level. The state subsidizes each city resident for housing and municipal services, transport, food, and medicines to the tune of R39,000. Additional funds will be allocated to maintain children's preschool establishments.

[Sorokin] Finally, what is the state of Tatarstan's relations with Russia? Two years have elapsed since work began on a draft treaty.

[Shaymiyev] The protracted break in the treaty process has now ended. In addition to examining questions of the economy at the January meeting in Moscow with President Boris Yeltsin, an accord was reached on completing the preparation of the treaty and intergovernmental agreements. An entirely new, previously unknown document is coming into being which proclaims the primacy of the person and the principles of Tatarstan's relations with the Russian Federation, foreign states, and international organizations. It is proposed to form plenipotentiary missions of Russia and Tatarstan in Kazan and Moscow. The treaty, on which we have been working for a long time, will soon happen. It will be a document of the reforming of Russia and of the Federation's renewal on democratic principles and the guarantor of Tatarstan's statehood.

Strange though it may seem, politicians have appeared who oppose the treaty. Living by the principles of "the worse, the better," they call for self-isolation. But the people do not support them. It is senseless, to say the least, to speak of Tatarstan's isolation. Are we not seeing how sovereign states are asking to join the CIS and wish to establish or restore economic ties? The people have gotten nothing from wholesale disintegration but new misfortunes. We cannot disregard this. Therefore we favor the treaty. The people are now inclined toward the elections, which will be held a second time in Tatarstan 13 March. We hope that deputies will be elected to the Federal Assembly and the State Duma.

Tatarstan Election Campaign Under Way

MK1502103094 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 15 Feb 94 p 2

[Dmitriy Lukashov report under the "Candidates" rubric: "Elections in Tatarstan: Part Two"]

[Text] By midnight on 14 February the process of collecting signatures and applications from local citizens wishing to compete for seats in the federal legislature ended in Tatarstan's five State Duma districts and one Federation Council district. A record was set by Privolzhskiy district No. 27: A total of 11 candidates plan to run for parliament there. A curious situation came about in Moskovskiy district No. 24, where the coveted seat will be contested by columnist Fedor Burlatskiy (it is yet unknown what relation to Tatarstan he has—SEGODNYA) and Yuriy Voronin, former deputy Russian Federation Supreme Soviet chairman, who had earlier been chairman of the Tatarstan State Planning Committee and had been nominated there for the Russian parliament. Aside from these, there are another five candidates registered in the district.

At least five candidates have been registered in three other State Duma districts also. Virtually all lists feature Tatarstan Communist Party nominees and candidates from "Equality and Rule-and- Law," Tatarstan's democratic bloc. Political observers have noted that there are few Tatar names in the lists of candidates who have already submitted documents. As in all of Russia in the latest elections, journalists and charismatic local leaders account for a significant share of the candidates.

As for the Federation Council, Tatarstan President Mintimer Shaymiyev and Supreme Soviet Chairman Farid Mukhametshin will apparently honor its meetings with their presence in the not so distant future. At least they have already submitted the requisite number of signatures. People in Kazan think that they both have virtually 100 percent chances of success, because their sole opponent is Aleksandr Lozovoy, a deputy chairman of the local parliament. It has been pointed out, however, that he may "draw" a certain share of votes of the Russian-speaking population thanks to his Slavic name.

On 18 February all electoral commissions are required to compete the authentication of electoral lists and other documents, after which registered candidates will be given appropriate certificates.

The new round of the Federal Assembly elections, which were deemed to have been invalid in December, is scheduled for 13 March.

International Affairs

Kravchuk Seeks Improved Cooperation in U.S. Visit

LD1602094994 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0924 GMT 16 Feb 94

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: No. 30 (520); by Sergey Logachev and Andrey Petrovsky; edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[Text] President Leonid Kravchuk's visit to the U.S. scheduled for early March should take relations between the two countries to a new level, head of the foreign political service of the Ukrainian president Anton Buteyko told "Interfax-Ukraine" news agency. In his words, the visit will become "a real realization of the words of the American president that if 1993 was the year of Russia, 1994 will become the year of Ukraine".

Buteyko pointed out that during the visit "the Ukrainian president hopes to confirm the development of cooperation", paying special attention to "the transformation of political agreements into economic ones". He said that the Charter on principles of relations between Ukraine and the U.S. will be adopted in Washington.

Besides, Buteyko said that documents on the development of economic ties and trade, cooperation in the space field and aid for conversion of the Ukrainian military complex, as well as on humanitarian and financial aid, had been prepared for the signing. Treaties on mutual protection of investment and prevention of dual taxation have also been prepared for the signing.

In Buteyko's opinion, "the American administration is finishing the re-evaluation of its attitude to Ukraine".

Ministry Denies Cutting Russian Power Supplies

LD1502213794 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1700 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Some foreign information sources have circulated reports, from which it follows that the energy crisis enveloping Ukraine is so strong that it has forced it to suspend not only its energy deliveries to Hungary, Bulgaria, Romania, the Czech Republic, and Austria, but also the transit Russian energy deliveries. To what extent does this correspond to reality?

A UKRINFORM correspondent was informed at Ukraine's Ministry of Power and Electrification, that a tense situation with supplying electric power stations with organic fuel really did arise in Ukraine in the autumn-winter period of 1993-94. The main reasons were the more than hundredfold price increase for imported gas and oil products, tariffs on electric power lagging behind the general increase in the price of fuel, and also consumers' not wishing to pay the power industry.

Left alone with its fuel problems, Ukraine's unified power supply was forced to lower the frequency of the alternating current in the grid. Namely for this reason the power systems of Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary separated from it, and the export of electric power by the Lvov interstate (?crossing) was suspended.

The suspension of its deliveries naturally did not evoke especial enthusiasm from [Ukraine's] foreign partners. However, they had an understanding attitude to the problems of their eastern neighbors and expressed their readiness for further cooperation after the situation improves. At the same time, they emphasized at the ministry of power and electrification, Ukrainian power engineers are continuing to carry out the transit of electric power from Russia to Bulgaria and Austria, although to date the Russian side has not extended the relevant agreement.

They assert at the ministry that other events in the said reports do not correspond to reality either, for example, those concerning Ukraine's losses of one and a half billion from the suspension of exports or [concerning] the urgent measures by parliamentarians of eastern European countries regarding uniting with western countries and excluding Ukraine from the number of partners.

It was noted at the ministry of power and electrification that the process of integrating the economies of eastern European states in to the west European economic system, initiated by the leaders of the Visegrad Four countries in 1992, also includes gradual preparation for the transition by the power systems of these countries into a west European union. In order to resolve this problem the power engineers of Hungary, Germany, Poland, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic set up the organization (?Centrel), to which Ukraine was accepted as an observer.

In particular the organization called for a resolution to the issue of keeping the technical possibilities for Central and Western Europe to receive electric power from Ukraine and Russia. A regular Centrel consultation in Warsaw on 16-17 February will be about this with the participation of a Ukrainian delegation.

Similarly the Russian plans to construct new lines of electricity transfer to Europe via Belarus are not caused by the current fuel situation in Ukraine, but are a part of a long-term program of integrating Russia's power system in the Europe-wide power house.

And so, although the situation in Ukraine's power engineering continues to remain tense, they summarized at the country's minister of power and electrification, it is not a catastrophic one.

Defense Minister Views Relations With Russia

AU1002205094 Budapest MAGYAR HIRLAP in Hungarian 10 Feb 94 p 3

[Interview with Defense Minister Vitaliy Radetskyy by Zoltan Gyevai in Budapest; date not given: "A Ukrainian-Russian War Is Mere Speculation"]

[Text] According to the Ukrainian defense minister, the breaking out of an armed conflict between Moscow and Kiev is impossible. Air attacks in Bosnia would only exacerbate the situation and the addressees would not be the ones to suffer from it, Ukrainian Defense Minister Vitaliy Radetskyy declared in a short interview to MAGYAR HIRLAP prior to his departure after a visit in Budapest.

[Gyevai] Some Western predictions warn of the possibility of a war between Russia and Ukraine because of the critical economic situation in Ukraine. Does Kiev feel such a danger?

[Radetskyy] No, and I find this impossible. The economy is in a serious state in both Ukraine and in Russia. A war does not strengthen the economic situation; on the contrary, it weakens the economy. Therefore, in my view, the predictions you have mentioned are mere speculations.

[Gyevai] How did Kiev receive the Russian request that the United Nations authorize Moscow to carry out peacekeeping activity in the sensitive points of the former Soviet Union?

[Radetskyy] I must say that we have not yet dealt with this issue. At the same time, we think it is important that every such peacekeeping mission should take place under UN auspices. I do not find it expedient to carry out such tasks separately, especially not in the CIS.

[Gyevai] On what does Ukraine want to focus in implementing the Partnership for Peace program proposed by NATO?

[Radetskyy] First of all, we have a positive approach toward the initiative itself. We are in favor of accepting peacekeeping tasks in various regional conflicts. We discussed the issue and, in my opinion, this seems to be the optimal and most acceptable solution.

[Gyevai] What is your opinion of the idea that NATO should use air attacks as a response to the attack in Sarajevo last week?

[Radetskyy] I oppose the use of the air force because this will not solve the problem we are facing. It will not only fail to solve the problem, but it will even exacerbate the situation. In addition, such an action would cause civilians, children, old people, and women to suffer, rather than the warring factions. I think that we should seek a solution in two directions. On the one hand, the sides involved in this conflict should settle their internal differences of views. On the other hand, this endeavor should be supported not only by words but also by deeds. However, the supply of arms and military equipment is not the proper way of support.

Unilateral Disarmament 'Under Duress' Criticized

WS1402171994 Kiev VECHIRNIY KYYIV in Ukrainian 10 Feb 94 p 2

[Article by Volodymyr Yavorskyy: "Why Have We Been Disarmed?"]

[Text] It is sad but true: Ukraine is giving up its nuclear weapons—the same kind of weapons that other countries seek to obtain by all legitimate and illegitimate means, and that countries which already have them do not want to let slip from their hands. Ukraine is giving them up voluntarily. And to whom? To Russia—a state that trod Ukraine down for 300 years, and which is currently putting forward territorial claims against us; a state from which direct threats are addressed against us, and in which the rapid advancement of chauvinistic forces is plain for all to see.

Perhaps we are handing over our nuclear weapons because they have lost their value? Not at all. Their value remains colossal. Moreover, they serve as the only sure protection against aggression from any state. No wonder that certain countries—Israel, Pakistan, India, and others—have either already acquired them, or are very close to developing them. The material and financial value of nuclear weapons is also astronomically high. Their enormous value is beyond question.

So why is Ukraine voluntarily giving up this enormous treasure that is so desired by others? Perhaps because we love peace more than all other nations of the world? Or maybe we do not realize what we have really obtained by the will of God?

Neither. Everything is much more prosaic. It is simply that other states, primarily Russia and the United States, are forcing us to hand over our nuclear weapons. They are forcing us by threats, moral and economic pressure, and other means. Ukraine is not giving up its nuclear weapons voluntarily but under duress. One should be deeply aware of this truth, which is shameful for us Ukrainians.

From the dense demagogy of the president, who is trying to portray Ukraine's defeat in the issue of nuclear weapons almost as a victory, we could single out one argument that is being repeated with many variations: Ukraine is unable to keep its nuclear weapons because it does not have enough strength to withstand the pressure from Russia, the United States, and other countries. It does not have the strength because the Ukrainian people are not united, the economy is in shambles, our scientific potential is poorly organized, and because it has not found allies on the international arena.

It is really hard for Ukraine to resist the external pressure in this situation. Who has reduced Ukraine to such a condition?

Are we to believe that the complex circumstances in which Ukraine finds itself are the objective reasons why it is impossible to preserve our nuclear weapons? "Ukraine cannot keep its nuclear weapons because this is objectively impossible!"—the media keep telling us. Is that really true?

It is only half the truth. Ukraine really cannot preserve its nuclear weapons—not because of objective reasons, however, but because of subjective ones. This does not mean that it is totally impossible, but that President Kravchuk and his team are unable to do it. The current Ukrainian leadership is unable to cope with the numerous problems

facing the state, and it frequently surrenders in the face of those difficulties. The problem is not the nuclear weapons themselves, but the ability to conduct a clear and consistent foreign policy, unify the Ukrainian people, speed up economic reforms, mobilize the country's scientific potential, and find strong and reliable allies abroad. How is it possible to speak about a state without these aspects?

Having something of colossal value such as nuclear weapons, one could use them as a powerful lever to solve all economic and political problems. Had Ukraine decided to proclaim unilateral nuclear disarmament, it would have obtained concessions and guarantees from Russia, the United States, and other countries, which would have put it among the leading countries of Europe. Still, what is possible for the strong is impossible for the weak, such as our leadership.

National Affairs

Meshkov, Navy At Odds Over Command Subordination

LD1502223994 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 2140 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Sevastopol, 15 Feb—Citizens of Crimea should undergo military service on the territory of the Republic of Crimea. Yuriy Meshkov, president of the republic of Crimea, has sent this instruction addressed to the command of Ukraine's Navy. With regard to this, representatives of Ukraine's navy have stated that they are subordinate to Ukraine's Ministry of Defense and to Leonid Kravchuk, Ukraine's president and commander of the Ukraine armed forces. In their opinion, the president of the Republic of Crimea does not have jurisdiction over the command of Ukraine's Navy.

Meshkov Statement on Ruble Criticized

LD1502201494 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1651 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] The statement Yuriy Meshkov, the Crimean President, made about making the Russian ruble a legal tender in the peninsula was "ill-conceived and premature." Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Valeriy Shmarov, who said so in an Interfax-Ukraine interview, added that "the Russian ruble will never be legal in Ukraine."

He said that the Ukrainian leaders were thinking of "ways and means" of allowing the Crimean authorities a maximum of self-government but "the budgetary relations will remain largely unchanged."

He described the Black Sea Fleet as "a powerful cover of the entire south of both Ukraine and Russia" but emphasized that "the Black Sea coast is, above all, our southern border."

Meshkov Claims Independence as Crimea's Goal

LD1002234494 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1308 GMT 10 Feb 94

["Exclusive" report]

[Text] On February 4, leader of the Republican Party of Crimea Yuriy Meshkov was sworn in as Crimea's first president. In January, Interfax-Exclusive acquainted the reader with Yuriy Meshkov as a candidate to the presidential post. Political scientists believe that Meshkov's pro-Russian position may complicated relations between Moscow and Kiev. Moreover, some analysts predict that Crimea may become a second Karabakh. Interfax correspondent Sergey Safronov talks with Yuriy Meshkov.

IF: Some assert that the forthcoming referendum on Crimea's independence is the main element of your policy.

MESHKOV: The main aspect of my policy is Crimea's independence. Independence alone will allow us to solve our economic problems. The results of the presidential elections confirmed the population's orientation to economic, cultural and other links with Russia, and to a union with Russia. As to the referendum, there is a law on the referendum which must be observed.

IF: Do you mean economic aspects when you talk about Crimea's independence?

MESHKOV: Economy comes first. The forthcoming referendum is expected to put Crimea's economic independence on a juridical footing.

IF: Do you favor Crimea's integration with Russia or Crimea's complete independence?

MESHKOV: Our goal is an independent and self-sufficient Crimea. It will not be isolated from the CIS, however, but be a full-fledged member of a single economic system.

IF: Ukraine's Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko told Interfax recently that Ukraine was planning to depart from the Massandra agreements on the Black Sea Fleet and get back to the Yalta agreements. What is actually meant here is Kiev's refusal to pass the Ukrainian part of the Black Sea Fleet to Russia. What would you say about this?

MESHKOV: This is not the first time Kiev violates the international principle of observance of agreements. Agreement must be implemented, said the Roman law more than 2000 years ago. Ukraine's position has nothing to do with the principles and norms of international law. The Black Sea Fleet must be indivisible, belong to Russia and be based in Sevastopol which is an inalienable part of the Republic of Crimea.

IF: Suppose the Black Sea Fleet will belong to Russia. Simferopol may claim a compensation for the utilization of the fleet's infrastructure. What will relations be like between the Crimean authorities and the Black Sea Fleet?

MESHKOV: I hope these relations will be good and either side will observe its own interests.

IF: Moscow anxiously followed both rounds of presidential elections in Crimea. How do you assess Kiev's official reaction to your success and the defeat of the Crimean parliament speaker Nikolai Bagrov?

MESHKOV: How can one respond to almost unanimous results? (Last Friday the Crimean president had talks in Kiev with Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk. To quote Meshkov, the talks were sincere and gave a fresh impetus to Crimean-Ukrainian relations. "I returned to Simferopol with a shield," said Meshkov. Journalists note, however, that Meshkov looked depressed after the talks—Interfax).

IF: Some argue that the elections in Crimea were illegal, because they were at variance with the Ukrainian constitution, so their results might be challenged. Do you think such a situation may evolve into open military confrontation?

MESHKOV: No, it can't. One may say whatever one chooses, but no one can cancel the more than a million votes cast for the president. The elections were juridically grounded and no one should anticipate any unreasonable steps on the part of Kiev.

IF: Crimea is faced with many problems, including the problem of the Crimean Tatars. How are you going to tackle it?

MESHKOV: We shall seek a solution of this problem on the basis of international law and the laws of the Republic of Crimea. The material damage inflicted on the citizens of the Republic of Crimea must be compensated. The government must do so by all means and Simferopol will provide such guarantees. However, in tackling this problem Crimea must act in close cooperation with Russia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan (most of the Crimean Tatars banished from Crimea in 1944 live in Uzbekistan—Interfax).

IF: What would you say about the white Lincoln which a Crimean billionaire promised to give you?

MESHKOV: If he keeps the promise which he gave before the elections, when nobody knew who would become president, I will not consider this limo as something given to a specific person. I don't think I'll use it very often. But I might make use of it to welcome Leonid Kravchuk or Boris Yeltsin here in Crimea.

New Crimean Party To Participate in Elections

AU1502193694 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 11 Feb 94 p 6

[Unattributed report: "The Ukrainian Civic Congress of the Crimea Has Finally Been Registered"]

[Text] It took the leadership of the Ukrainian Civic Congress of the Crimea [UHCC] more than two months to have its party registered. The documents were returned several times for amendment. Finally, the long-awaited registration certificate has been received at the Crimean Ministry of Justice. The party is in favor of strengthening the status of the Crimean Republic as an autonomous and integral part of Ukraine. It will defend the interests of the peninsula's Ukrainian population. It will give much attention to military issues, especially the political and social protection of those Ukrainian servicemen who are serving in the Crimean Republic. The party intends to participate in the Crimean Supreme Council elections.

Talks With Crimea Examine Agreements, Resolutions

LD1602002194 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 2000 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Kiev, 15 Feb—A working consultation took place at Ukraine's Cabinet of Ministers on 15 February under the chairmanship of Deputy Prime Minister Valeriy Shmarov, at which a set of economic, financial, property, and other problems were examined, in particular the implementation of resolutions and agreements between Ukraine and the Republic of Crimea on agriculture, the water industry, and municipal services.

The heads of the Ministry of Machine-Building, Military-Industrial Complex and Conversion, the Ministry of Energy and Electrification, the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Ministry of Transport, and other ministries and departments of Ukraine, the leaders of Crimean Government structures headed by Anatoliy Franchuk, first deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Crimea, and directors of a number of Crimean enterprises, took part in the consultations.

The press service of the president and Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine reported that "the consultations proceeded in the spirit of full mutual understanding," and that Ukraine's Government will most likely take a decision on the results of its work.

A UNIAN correspondent has learned from unofficial sources that during the consultations, the Crimean delegation insisted on the resolution of the issue of resubordinating the town of Sevastopol to the Republic of Crimea. In an interview with a UNIAN correspondent Yaroslav Shpak, chief of Krymenerho [Crimea power] and a member of Crimea's delegation, reported that it has also been proposed to abolish the pass system in Sevastopol.

Russians Barred From Holding Crimean Post

LD1602000794 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 2000 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Kiev, 15 Feb—As UNIAN already reported on 14 February, Yevgeniy Saburov—a well-known Russian economist, who will in fact be heading the Crimean Government—is to begin fulfilling the duties of Crimea's deputy prime minister [as received] in the near future. Crimea's Constitution does not envisage the post of prime minister; the Cabinet of Ministers is led by the president of the autonomous republic.

In a conversation with a UNIAN correspondent on 15 February, Mykola Mykhalchenko, head of the service of the president of Ukraine for domestic policy issues, noted that

Saburov cannot be appointed to any state post as this runs counter to Ukrainian legislation, in particular Article 4: On public service in Ukraine, which indicates that the right to a state post belongs to citizens of Ukraine.

According to Mykhalchenko, without Ukrainian citizenship Saburov can only lay claim to a consultant's role in the apparatus of Crimean President Yuriy Meshkov. The head of the service of the president of Ukraine for domestic policy issues also stressed that he considers Saburov's utterances on introducing the Russian ruble on the peninsula in parallel with the Ukrainian karbovanets to be populist ones.

Interregional Bloc for Reforms Founded in Odessa

LD1602120094 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 2000 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Odessa—A UNIAN correspondent learned that a regional branch of the Interregional Bloc for Reforms [Kuchma-Hrynyov bloc] was set up on 14 February. It was founded on the initiative of Hryhoriy Rychahov, chairman of the regional branch of the Social Democratic Party of Ukraine; Andriy Krupnyk, city council deputy; Yuriy Zaporozhchenko, regional council deputy; and Viktor Tymofeyenko, chairman of the local branch of the New Ukraine association. The latter is notorious for the statement he made at last year's regional council session. He said he could prove that "it is Ukraine that is an empire which for 30 years has been sending its politicians to lead the Soviet Union, in which time these politicians ruined Russia".

The reform bloc regional branch's two latter founding members also coauthored the Odessa Oblast Council's ultimatum statement on the immediate signature by Ukraine of the CIS Charter. The initiative founders have now been nominated as candidates for people's deputies of Ukraine. The director of OdessaInform enterprise, Vitaliy Voskoboynykov, was elected coordinator of the Interregional Bloc for Reforms' branch in Odessa. The aim of its activity is backing the Kuchma-Hrynyov tandem in the forthcoming elections.

Struggle for Mass Media Under Way in Crimea

AU1502133594 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 11 Feb 94 p 1

[Unattributed report: "The Crimea: Harassment of Journalists"]

[Text] In the Crimea, the forces of the "Republican Movement of the Crimea" and of the "Russian Society of the Crimea" have intensified their campaign of pressure against dissident journalists. Picketing is organized of the Crimean and Sevastopol television and radio broadcasting companies and demands are advanced to dismiss television and radio journalists Tatyana Korobova, Lilya Budzhurova, Leonid Pilunskyy, and Halyna Khmelyovska, who occupy the position of common sense.

Clouds are gathering over president of the "Crimea" Television and Radio Broadcasting company Valeriy Astakhov, who is accused of pro-Ukrainian sentiments. In reality, Astakhov occupies a balanced centrist position. Some people even assert that a competition has been announced for the presently occupied post of president of the "Crimea" Television and Radio Broadcasting company. Those who claim this post include former head of the company Anatoliy Sivachenko, one of the leaders of the "Republican Movement of the Crimea" Boris Kizilov, and leader of the "Russian Party of the Crimea" Sergey Shuvaynikov.

'Extreme Zeal' in Promoting Nuclear Pact Queried

WS1502152794 Lvov SHLYAKH PEREMOHY in Ukrainian 12 Feb 94 p 5

[Article by Ihor Tarnopilskyy: "And the Defense Ministry Assures Us That the Army Is Outside Politics"]

[Text] The declaration by the presidents of Ukraine, Russia, and the United States on the nuclear weapons stationed on our territory is one of the most important events of last January and it triggered mixed reactions, especially in Ukraine. It will probably have significant influence on the fate of the Ukrainian people and state. President Leonid Kravchuk and his team, for example, claim that Ukraine's future will be bright and cloudless as soon as we give up or, to be more precise, hand over our nuclear arsenal to Russia. For the first time, officers and generals of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, headed by Defense Minister Army General Vitaliy Radetskyy, were actively involved in the campaign to support and propagate this idea. The extreme zeal with which the Ukrainian military pressed for the "nuclear trash" to be sent to our northern neighbor raises the suspicion that they might not get their pay only from Ukrainian funds. Whatever the case, Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev could not even dream of better advocates of his country's policies; and President Bill Clinton would definitely promise them high positions in the Pentagon (remember how they offered our president the job of press secretary for the U.S. President?).

On the other hand, one can understand Ukrainian Defense Ministry officials—they simply obey instruction from on high. As for the Defense Minister, however, it was expected that he would give a frank opinion about the situation. But Gen. Radetskyy did not have the guts to do this. It was done for him by Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko and Supreme Council deputies during the examination of the Moscow tripartite treaty and its annex. Following that session, it became obvious that the president's campaign is nothing but a fig leaf covering his and other high-ranking officials' blunders.

So Ukraine has lost the battle over the right to have its interests respected, and it was left at the mercy of two empires. Very soon, under a slight dollar anesthetic—and maybe even without it—it will have its "nuclear teeth"

removed. Moscow's playing of the "Crimean card," however, may stop this operation.

Incidentally, as this situation would certainly work to the Kremlin's advantage, the temptation to use it is very great. The newly elected Crimean khan, Meshkov, does not even conceal his pro-Moscow orientation, while the dropping of the moratorium on the all-Crimean referendum gives the green light to separatists. The self-assuredness of chauvinists will be boosted by the knowledge that standing behind them is the Black Sea Fleet—a heavy military fist—whose commander, Admiral Baltin, habitually "forgets" that he is accountable to two presidents. In late January, Baltin had another opportunity to pay tribute to the Kremlin and do some saber-rattling, which he certainly did according to the best imperial traditions. As a countermeasure to the Ukrainian strategic territorial defense exercises conducted in Kiev and led by the commander in chief, L. Kravchuk—which the Moscow media exaggerated to call "large-scale maneuvers in southern Ukraine"—Adm. Baltin ordered heightened combat readiness in the Coastal Guard Division and marine division exercises, including the loading of military equipment onto assault vessels and the support of about 20 vessels. At the same time, it was explained to personnel that Ukrainian military units and Ukrainian National Self-Defense detachments were hatching plans for the seizure of the Crimea. By these means, the Black Sea Fleet Command proved that it was resolutely protecting the Ukrainian Crimea against the Ukrainians.

One should also note that during these exercises, 43d Rocket Army Commander Volodymyr Mykhtyuk was promoted to colonel general. This "gift" from the president is explained by the fact that the commander eventually stopped vacillating and pledged allegiance to Ukraine. Hopefully, this example will be followed by other officers. By the way, Ukraine obtained one more general in January—Valeriy Hubenko, head of the State Committee for State Border Protection, who was promoted to this high rank.

It is not difficult to notice that with the ever increasing number of generals in the Ukrainian Army, the number of its problems is not decreasing. While some of these problems require considerable amounts of money and time to resolve, it is absurd to make a problem out of introducing the state language into the Army, particularly since the former defense minister, Gen. Morozov, proved this himself. He learned Ukrainian in a short time and spoke it with his subordinates. He also made sure that the language became predominate in the military. Once the leadership was changed, this process stopped and even reversed. Today, all commanders that have already switched over to Ukrainian in their everyday operations are forced to make their reports in Russian because the Defense Ministry "does not understand it well." Maybe they simply do not want to, Mr. Radetskyy?

Belarus

Hryb Gives 'Negative Response' to Strike Call

LD1502182594 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1536 GMT 15 Feb 94

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature No. 31 (521) by diplomatic correspondents Dmitriy Voskoboynikov, Igor Porshnev, Vitaliy Trubetskoy and others]

[Text] Leader of the Belarusian Parliament Mechyslaw Hryb has given a negative response to the indefinite strike called by the country's independent trade unions on Tuesday [15 February].

Speaking in Minsk, he described the situation as compounded and called for political issues to be resolved through dialogue but not pressure or violence.

Hryb is sure that the strike was not initiated on the ground but from on high—"the republican strike committee and opposition People's Front which are in pursuit of their own political goals having nothing to do with the interests of ordinary workers." The strike organizers demand the resignation of the government and dissolution of parliament.

The Belarusian leader says the strike "may delay the signing of a monetary union with Russia."

He also said that in the emerging situation, "the law enforcement bodies would act "within the legal framework and check any illegal action."

For his part, Prime Minister Vyacheslaw Kebich told Interfax that "the strike committee is trying to disorganize the national economy by capitalizing on economic hardships".

He described as groundless committee claims of calling for widespread stoppages. The Prime Minister said a large part of the factories came to a standstill for economic reasons long before the strike was called.

Interfax correspondents in Minsk say that a crowd of about 2,000 people gathered in front of the Government House in Independence Square at 12:00 Moscow Time, but all approaches to the House itself are blocked by police units. Our correspondents who inspected nearby streets say they found no military hardware there.

The police are having to put up with the protesters' violation of the government ban on any mass action, except on state occasions, in Independence Square, a senior police official told Interfax on condition of anonymity. He said the police did not intervene to avoid "fuelling tension."

The demonstrators demand the government resign before the parliament convenes on February 22 or face an indefinite strike.

The protesters have decided to stage a march to the parliament building to hand in a petition demanding the dissolution of parliament.

It is still unclear how many people are involved in the general strike though preliminary reports from the regions say the committee's call failed to drum up widespread support on the ground.

In the meantime, messages of support to the strikers have come from independent trade unions of Russia and Ukraine and Russia's independent mineworkers unions, committee spokesman Aleksandr Lysenko told Interfax.

Receives Strike Committee

LD1502183194 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1651 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Mechyslaw Hryb, Chairman of the Belarusian Supreme Soviet, received a delegation of the national strike committee sent to him by participants of the big rally in Minsk.

According to Interfax's sources, Hryb emphasized that the Supreme Soviet, which is to be convened one of these days, would discuss a new Constitution, in particular the state structure.

He promised the delegation that the petition he had from them would be discussed at the next Thursday's meeting of the Supreme Soviet presidium.

People's Deputy Sergey Antonchik, a strike committee member, said that the indefinite strike in the republic was continuing. The next rally will be held on Independence Square in Minsk on February 22, when parliament is scheduled to be reconvened.

Our correspondent in Minsk reports that the rally, attended by a crowd of about 6000, has moved from Independence Square to outside the parliament building.

Now the rally demands that the national strike committee be given 15 minutes on the television immediately after the evening news program, reinstatement Vladimir Yegorov as interior minister as well as resignation of the cabinet and dissolution of parliament.

Yegorov had been dismissed for allowing the arrest and removal to Vilnius of Lithuanian communist leaders Mikolas Burokevicius and Juozas Jermalavicius.

Belarusian Deputy Interior Minister Konstantin Platonov told Interfax that no trouble had erupted during the rally or march towards the parliament building.

He did not rule out the possibility, however, that "measures will be taken" against strike committee activists. For one thing, they had staged a rally on Independence Square where no public events other than national holidays can be held. What is more, the rally had not been authorized.

Platonov also said that the activities of the committees were illegal because it had not been officially registered.

Strike Deemed 'Success'

WS1502172994 Minsk BELAPAN in Belarusian 1700 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Belarusian Strike Committee Spokesman Alyaksandr Lysenka has told BELAPAN that rallies demanding early elections and the resignation of the government were held today in Minsk, Mogilev, Soligorsk, Zhodino, and Vileyka. Assessing the workers' actions, Lysenka pointed out: "This is a success. The situation in the Republic is so complicated that people found it hard to make the decision to join the political strike. However, mass actions did take place and tens of thousands of people took part in them. We believe that we will soon see the real political results of this undertaking."

Lysenka underlined that if the Strike Committee Council receives no answer to its petition by 1300 [1100 GMT] on 22 February, the general political strike will be resumed on the morning of 23 February. The same will happen if the administration begins persecuting the organizers of the action.

Meanwhile, Kebich's Press Secretary Uladzimir Zamyatalin pointed out that "the ultimate decisive battle" urged by the strike's organizers had not taken place. Zamyatalin added that "common sense prevailed. This proves that our society is moving toward democracy."

Situation 'Tense'

PM1502182794 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Feb 94 First Edition p 1

[Correspondent Aleksandr Starikevich report: "Strike in Belarus Has Not Been General, But Situation Is Tense"]

[Text] Minsk—The first few hours of the strike give no grounds for concluding that any one has won the strike committee versus government confrontation. A draw seems to be the most likely outcome of the first round of the strike.

Right until the last moment the republic authorities did everything they could to slow the strike movement down somewhat. The day before several people who distributed pro-strike leaflets were arrested by the militia. Printing of SVABODA, one of the largest democratic newspapers, was wrecked thanks to an anonymous phone call. The telephones and the heating have been cut off at the republic strike committee building itself, so strike committee representatives lack complete information at present as to what is happening on the ground. They know that some workers at Soligorsk's no. 3 mine have joined in the strike. The management of that enterprise is threatening to count strike days as absenteeism. The strike committee members consider that a reliable picture of what is happening will become clear as evening approaches, but meanwhile they could be receiving both accurate information and disinformation.

Your IZVESTIYA correspondent visited several enterprises in the Belarusian capital in the morning, including notably Belvar and Tranzistor, which are the most explosive centers. But so far those plants are working as normal. They began paying out wages at Belvar at 0800 hours.

By 1100 hours around 5,000 people were gathered on Minsk's main square in front of the parliament building. These included representatives of the wheeled truck tractor, automated production line, and other Minsk plants. The demonstrators were kept back from the government residence by a cordon of militiamen. A rally began at which strike committee leaders and people's deputies of the Republic of Belarus spoke.

"I think that everything has begun better than could have been expected," Sergey Naumchik, one of the parliamentary opposition leaders, told your correspondent. "Those already gathered in the square and demanding the resignation of the government and the Supreme Council will be joined by others. I think that the strike will be wave-like in nature: It can fall and then rise. At any rate, the main events are due in the spring."

The strike committee members who spoke in the square hold roughly the same opinion. According to them, the strike is conceived as a permanent process. They think that from today the strike movement will be in the ascendant.

At the same time statements about either the success or the failure of the strike seem somewhat optimistic. On the one hand, the majority has not joined in the action so far. Thus one could say that the strike committee's efforts as of midday 15th February have not yielded great results. But the nonaligned majority has not demonstrated support for the government either but has merely exploited the situation to extract the maximum material benefit out of it in the form, for example, of wages, which many had not received for two to three months. The government's carrot-proferring tactics are undoubtedly good, but, given that the stocks of those carrots are nearing their end, it is not clear what will restrain the workers next time. The strike committees have also shouldered a burden in this situation which they will scarcely be able to deal with: It will be virtually impossible to motivate people who are in the main politically apathetic by means of purely political demands.

Strike Ends; Another Planned

LD1602150394 Minsk Belarusian Foreign Ministry Department of Information in Russian 1241 GMT 16 Feb 94

[Text] The nationwide indefinite political strike declared for 15 February ended early. Not a single worker in Minsk went out onto Independence Square in support of the demands of the strike committees. There was a rally on Independence Square. Among the speakers, there were only representatives of the strike committees and the BPF [Belarus People's Front]. They sharply criticized the government and the Supreme Soviet. From Independence Square, the people in the rally proceeded in a column to the Supreme Soviet building, where they passed on their demands to Chairman of Supreme Soviet Mechyslaw

Hryb. The demands include the resignation of the government and elections to the Supreme Soviet in March. In the opinion of the ralliers, the speaker should give his reply not later than 22 February, the day the Supreme Soviet resumes work. The latest rally on Independence Square is set for precisely that time. The members of the strike committee are continuing to carry out organizational work, calling on the workers to strike.

Chernomyrdin Visit 'Delay' Not Due to Monetary Union Issue

LD1602134894 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1136 GMT 16 Feb 94

[Text] Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin's visit to Minsk has been repeatedly postponed due to a difficult situation in Russia, chief of the Belarusian government's Information Department Vasiliy Dragovets reported to Interfax.

In his words, Belarus' Council of Ministers has no grounds to think that the delay in the trip is connected with Chernomyrdin's unwillingness to sign documents on creation of a monetary union between two countries.

"Russian and Belarusian premiers have firmly agreed to unite monetary systems," noted Dragovets.

Referring to the opinion of the chairman of the Belarusian Council of Minister Vyacheslav Kebich, Dragovets said that the final date of Viktor Chernomyrdin's visit to Minsk would be coordinated after conclusion of the British Prime Minister John Major's visit to Moscow.

Moldova

14th Army Warns Against 'Provocations' as Election Nears

PM1502160594 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 15 Feb 94 p 3

[Sergey Knyazkov report: "Trouble on Banks of Dniester. 14th Russian Army Once Again Center of Worsening Moldovan-Dniester Relations"]

[Text] The closer the early elections to the Moldovan parliament scheduled for 27 February get, the tenser the atmosphere in the republic becomes. In all, 1,024 candidates from 13 parties and blocs and 12 independent candidates are running for 104 seats in the new parliament. But the election represents not merely a formal change of deputies in Moldova's top legislative body, but also a kind of referendum on the future path of the state's development.

The Agrarian Democratic Party, clear favorite in the election marathon, is in favor of preserving state independence. The Socialist, Social Democratic, and other parties are fighting for votes with similar programs. To counterbalance them, the People's Front of Moldova and the "Civic Alliance of Romania" have come up with the idea of uniting the republic with Romania. But, according to the Moldovan Embassy in Moscow, these ideas have the backing of no more than 8 percent of the population.

The alarm over the possibility of more bloodshed seems not unfounded. In the Dniester Region, for instance, the creation of polling places and technical groups to hold the elections is forbidden. Dniester Moldovan Republic [DMR] President Igor Smirnov's edict introducing a special situation came into force 20 January. Admittedly, the Central Electoral Commission is examining the possibility of organizing a ballot on the Right Bank of the Dniester for Moldovan citizens resident in Left Bank rayons. Despite Gagauz leaders' refusal to take part in elections, polling places will also be set up in some rayons of southern Moldova with compact Gagauz communities.

The 14th Russian Army has once again taken center stage in politics. After Commander Aleksandr Lebed announced the policy of "armed neutrality," it stopped the war between Moldova and the Dniester Region. DMR power structures are now accusing Lebed of attempting a coup d'etat, preparations for which allegedly began back in January last year. That naturally brought retaliation. In a statement disseminated by the mass media the 14th Army's Military Council drew attention to the exacerbation of the situation in the unrecognized DMR. The leadership of the 14th Army accused the managerial apparatus of the DMR of being corrupt and merging with the criminal world, which has created over 200 criminal groupings in the Dniester Region. Official circles in Moldova and the Dniester Region have been warned that they must abandon their illusions as to the possibility of resolving matters in the region by strong-arm methods. People organizing armed provocations from the Left Bank of the Dniester, the statement says, will be severely punished for attempting to unleash conflict. If large-scale armed provocation arises, no matter who is behind it, the 14th Army reserves the right to "cool overly hot heads."

Envoy Accuses Moscow of 'Two-Faced Policy'

AU1602092094 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 0500 GMT 16 Feb 94

[Text] In an interview granted to Chisinau television, the ambassador of the Republic of Moldova in Moscow, Mr. Anatol Taranu, said that the Russian Federation is promoting a two-faced policy toward the Republic of Moldova and that the withdrawal of the Russian 14th Army from the territory of his country is being postponed deliberately, our correspondent Mircea Dascaliuc reported.

The eighth round of negotiations on the terms and conditions of the 14th Army withdrawal will not take place very soon, Mr. Taranu also said, for the simple reason that the Russian Federation hopes that after the 27 February elections in the Republic of Moldova, the Chisinau Parliament will include forces prepared to yield more easily and thus concessions may be obtained.

Dniester Sees Threat From Moldova, Lebed

PM1502154194 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 15 Feb 94 p 2

[Vladimir Grevtsev report: "Dniester Region Under Threat"]

[Text] Tiraspol—The Dniester Moldovan Republic [DMR] Supreme Soviet has adopted an appeal to the UN secretary general, the CSCE, the worlds' parliaments, and the CIS countries. As we know, it points out, elections to neighboring Moldova's parliament are taking place 27 February in which the DMR is not participating. The DMR's nonparticipation essentially signals the Dniester Region's de jure separation from the Republic of Moldova.

The Moldovan authorities are making every effort to ensure that the elections do actually take place on DMR territory. Alongside the concentration of Moldovan armed formations on the border with the DMR, an attempt is being made to assail the Dniester Region from inside. It is being made first and foremost by General A. Lebed, commander of the Russian Federation 14th Army, and M. Bergman, commandant of the Tiraspol Garrison, around whom the local neobourgeois forces are grouping. Recently, Lebed more or less openly set out to overthrow the DMR's leadership by force. The general and his closest aide, Bergman, are appealing for a "march with pitchforks" against the organs of power, promising "to provide material assistance for the funerals" of the republic's leadership, as well as other such statements.

In its appeal, the republic's parliament requests the United Nations, the CSCE, the world's parliaments, and the CIS countries to urgently send observers to the DMR with a view to "preventing the worsening of the economic blockade and the outbreak of armed conflict."

Speaker Says Parliament Must Solve Separatism Problem

LD1602155394 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1224 GMT 16 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Fyodor Angeliy]

[Text] Chisinau February 16 TASS—The future Moldovan parliament, which will be elected on February 27, should begin its work by solving the Dniester and Gagauz problems, should seek ways to surmount the country's deep crisis by political methods alone, taking into account the interests of all the sides involved and making concessions to each other for the sake of Moldova's integrity and independence," speaker of the Moldovan parliament Petr Luchinsky told TASS. Luchinsky is taking part in the election race as candidate from the Agrarian-Democratic Party of Moldova.

"The people of Moldova," he noted, "had to pay a high price for the adventurism and incompetence of politicians of the national- patriotic hue, who landed in the republic's governing structures by sheer chance. Blood was spilled. It will take not only the present generation, but many generations to come to disentangle this tangle. This is why the problem of the Dniester area and the southern part of the country should be regarded as the two most important issues," the speaker believes.

In his opinion, there are ways to solve the Dniester problem. One of them presupposes a gradual elimination of crisis phenomena within the bounds of an integral Moldovan state. "The Chisinau authorities should offer the Tiraspol leaders to restore a single budget and thereby lay the foundation for an early stabilisation of industrial production. A law should be drawn up at the same time guaranteeing a special legal status to the left-bank areas of Moldova, Luchinsky stated. He favours the eventual transfer of many governing functions to the regional authorities, which will placate the people.

The speaker of the Moldovan parliament noted that initially the Tiraspol leaders seemed to accept this idea. "But somewhat later their unwillingness to bring this seemingly found solution of the Dniester conflict to a logical end became apparent again. Ambitiousness, typical for them, and unwillingness to cooperate in the spirit of consensus, has obviously taken the upper hand and they are going out of their way to secure the republic's final dismemberment," he stated.

Gagauz Region To Vote in Parliamentary Elections

LD1602131594 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1203 GMT 16 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Demidetskiy]

[Text] Chisinau February 16 TASS—The breakaway southern Gagauz region of Moldova, which earlier refused to participate in parliamentary elections, has now changed its mind. Another breakaway region, that of Dniestr, has eased its negative attitude to elections.

President of Gagauz region Stepan Topal agreed to hold elections to Moldovan parliament on the territory of the region after talks with Moldovan Prime Minister Andrei Sangheli late on Tuesday [15 February].

Earlier the Gagauz leadership conditioned the holding of elections by receiving the status of autonomy, while Moldovan President Mircea Snegur urged the Gagauz region to drop preliminary conditions, join the new parliament which would then solve the problem of the status.

It was agreed that polling stations will be open across the whole of the Gagauz region, Sangheli told TASS on Wednesday.

"This will undoubtedly result in a stabilisation of the situation, will strengthen mutual understanding bewteen various nationalities in Moldova", Sangheli commented adding that the final decision on the Gagauz participation in elections will be adopted by the local parliament on Thursday.

Also on Wednesday authorities of the Dniester region said they would not obstruct citizens wishing to take part in the parliamentary elections in Moldova, but reiterated there would be no election on the teritory of the region.

The press service of Igor Smirnov, the president of the unrecognised Dniester Republic, issued a statement saying that the Tiraspol authorities would continue to boycott the elections and would not open any voting stations on their territory. Nevertheless, they will not prevent citizens from crossing over to the other side of the Dniester River on the day of the elections in order to cast their ballots at voting stations there.

The Dniester leader invited observers from foreign states, including CIS countries, to come to the Dniester Republic and see on the spot that this assurance is fulfilled.

Kazakhstan

Nazarbayev Meets U.S., World Bank, IMF Officials

LD1602101994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0921 GMT 16 Feb 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Amangeldy Akhmetalimov and Igor Barsukov]

[Text] Washington February 16 TASS—Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev, currently paying an official visit to the United States, arrives in New York from Washington on Tuesday evening.

While in Washington, Nazarbayev met leaders of some major international financial organisations. On Tuesday he received World Bank President Lewis Preston at Blair-House, the official residence of heads of state and government visiting Washington. Later in the day he met managing director of the International Monetary Fund Michel Camdessus. Nazarbayev also had talks with U.S. Secretary of Commerce Ronald Brown and First Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Roger Oltman.

"Good relations are shaping up between the international financial organisations and Kazakhstan," Nazarbayev told ITAR-TASS. Thanks to the influence of the International Monetary Fund and the U.S. Treasury, representatives of Western donor-countries have decided to grant Kazakhstan financial aid amounting to 1.3 billion U.S. dollars, thrice the expected sum. During the meeting with the U.S. secretary of commerce, the sides discussed the possibility of setting up a joint commercial-economic commission, which could be headed from the American side by the U.S. secretary of commerce, and from the Kazakh side—by the minister for foreign economic relations. The talks with first deputy secretary of the treasury focused on the problem of expanding American aid to Kazakhstan.

President Clinton announced on Monday that the United States would allocate to Kazakhstan 311 million U.S. dollars as compared to 91 million dollars last year. "I believe our relations will develop normally," Nazarbayev stressed.

The Kazakh leader received later in the day James Baker, former U.S. secretary of state, and Zbigniew Brzezinski, prominent American political scientist and former presidential adviser on national security. Then Nazarbayev met representatives of U.S. science and the arts in one of the Washington hotels. He told them about the results of his talks and the agreements reached with the American administration. He also replied to questions, particularly on the situation in the region where Kazakhstan is located, on his country's relations with Russia, and on cooperation in space research. The Kazakh president called at the embassy of his country in the United States.

Tajikistan

Border Post Comes Under Attack

LD1502164894 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1123 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] The Information Department of the Tajikistan's Foreign Ministry reported to INTERFAX that on Monday a frontier post deployed on the section of the 12th frontier post of the Moscow frontier department on the Tajik-Afghan border was fired at by four jet shells. The adversary's firing hardware was damaged by counterfire. The same day a frontier detachment stationed on the section of the Khorog frontier came under small arms fire from Afghanistan territory. No casualties are reported.

On the whole, Tajikistan's territory and Russian frontier detachments have been subjected to shelling from the Afghan territory 18 times over the month and a half of this year, said leader of the Information Department of the Tajik Foreign Ministry Zafar Saidov. In his words, this creates conditions for further destabilization of the situation on the Tajik-Afghan border.

Third Mi-8 Helicopter Crashes Killing 11 People

PM1502142594 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 15 Feb 94 p 1

[Russian Border Troops Press Bureau report: "Fatal Day, Fatal Hour...Fatal Helicopter!"]

[Text] An Mi-8 helicopter from a Russian border troop group crashed 13 February at 1300 hours Moscow Time 5 km from Shuroabad.

Eleven people died—four crew members and seven passengers. The helicopter was flying to Dushanbe from the 14th Moscow Border Detachment Outpost. The cause of the crash is being investigated by a commission of the Russian Federation Border Troops High Command led by Major General Aleksey Shcherbakov, deputy commander in chief. We remind you that this is the third Mi-8 crash in the last four days.

Uzbekistan

Uzbekistan State TV Stops Relay of Novosti Bulletins

LD1202212994 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2000 GMT 12 Feb 94

[Text] The Uzbekistan State TV and Radio Company stopped the relay of morning and evening Novosti news bulletins of the Ostankino TV and Radio Company. INTERFAX reports that the reason for this was that the Ostankino leadership had failed to sign an agreement with Uzbekistan on the relay of its programs for this year. At the same time, it was pointed out the relay of entertainment and other programs of Ostankino continued to the full degree.

Ostankino, Russian TV Disconnected Over Payment Problem

LD1502182394 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1500 GMT 15 Feb 94

[By correspondent Shakhnoza Ganiyeva from Uzbekistan, including recording of remarks by K. Usmanov, head of Uzbekistan's Radio and Television Production Association; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Ostankino TV's channel one and Russian TV were disconnected from 0900 this morning until this evening in Uzbekistan. The republican TV center did not receive these programs either. I remind you that transmission of Novosti programs has been partially disrupted here for almost a week. During the day viewers in the republic have only been able to see two editions of Novosti from Ostankino, at 1200 and 2100 local time. Other programs were screened without alteration, but clearly, the chronic problem of non-payment has finally caught up. We turned to the republic's communications ministry for an explanation:

[Usmanov] The primary reason is that the Ostankino and Russian TV companies owe the Uzbek communications ministry about 1 billion rubles for 1993. Second, no contracts have yet been signed for 1994. We sent off telegrams asking these TV companies to dispatch representatives so that contracts for 1994 can be concluded.

[Ganiyeva] Well, at the end of the day, a sovereign state is entitled to relay or not to relay programs from Russia, but what, in that case, can viewers do? They are starved of both bread and circuses.

Country Scraps State Farms, Ostankino TV News

MK1502132594 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 15 Feb 94 p 5

[INTERFAX report: "State Farms Scrapped Together With 'Ostankino' News Programs"]

[Text] The government of Uzbekistan decided on 12 February to scrap state farms and lease their land to peasants in 1994. The 265 state farms remaining in the republic will adopt other forms of economic operation.

Relays of "Ostankino" news have also been terminated. The cap on broadcasts from Moscow is explained in Tashkent by the fact that "Ostankino" chiefs have not signed an accord on relaying their programs to Uzbekistan in 1994. The other programs (with the exception of news) of the "Ostankino" channel continue to be relayed to Uzbekistan in full.

Trade Agreement With Romania Signed in Tashkent

LD1302212794 Tashkent Radio Tashkent in Russian 0215 GMT 13 Feb 94

[Text] An agreement on trade and economic cooperation between our republic and Romania was signed in Tashkent at Uzbekistan's Foreign Economic Relations Ministry. The agreement was signed on behalf of our state by Muratbek Rustambekov, the first deputy minister of foreign economic relations, and for Romania by Mihai Berinde, state secretary at the Ministry of Trade and head of the Foreign Trade Department.

Romania has an interest in expanding mutually advantageous supplies in the area of oil equipment for the food and textiles industry.

The delegation that came to Tashkent ipcludes business people who intend to renew interrupted ties in the field of using raw materials resources, such as cotton fiber. They are also prepared to export to the republic furniture for which there is demand on the world market.

The agreement that was signed is a new step in the development of direct economic contacts between independent Uzbekistan and Romania.

Armenia

Latest Foreign Ministry Statements on Karabakh Conflict

'Internationalization' Viewed

LD1502205494 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1947 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] The Armenian Foreign Ministry expresses its concern over the actions of the Azerbaijani party aimed at stirring up the conflict in the region, the ministry's statement published in Yerevan on Tuesday says. It underlines that there was a recently emerged tendency for internationalization of the Karabakh conflict, meaning involvement of foreign advisors and recruits and utilization of foreign weaponry by Azerbaijan.

The Armenian Foreign Ministry believes that the dangerous deterioration of the situation in the region was due to the Azerbaijani official strategic policy aimed at resolving the conflict in Karabakh by force of weapons. The document says that Baku rejected the peaceful proposals put forward by the CSCE Minsk group welcomed by Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh, the mediating activities of Russia and the appeal of the International Olympic Committee's president to establish a temporary cease-fire for the period of the winter Olympic Games in Lillehammer.

The Armenian Foreign Ministry regretted that the international community had not blamed Azerbaijan for this.

European Parliament Resolution

NC1502214094 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 2050 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] The European Parliament adopted a joint decision on 10 February in which it expressed its unease over the continuing conflict between the Armenians and Azerbaijanis, which has created an alarming situation in the region.

The text of the decision reads: Concerned about the danger of the internationalization of the conflict, the European Parliament advises the regional countries and governments and all other powerful countries to refrain from providing any military assistance to the conflicting sides.

Every country, especially Turkey, that neighbors Armenia and Azerbaijan is called upon to allow free transport of freight destined for both countries.

The European Parliament supports the presidency's statement, which calls on the sides to show restraint and not to create new suffering for the population, which has already suffered cruelly because of the war.

It reaffirms its adherence to the principle of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and calls on all the involved sides to resolve the conflict peacefully by respecting the UN Security Council resolutions.

Commenting on the European Parliament decision, the Armenian Foreign Ministry Press and Public Relations Service expressed concern that the document finds the European Parliament continuing to tell the international public that the years of conflict between Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh are a conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Identifying the sides directly involved and those dragged into the conflict would help them to understand the real essence of the conflict and the more goal-oriented [word indistinct] of the peace process.

Foreign Minister, Turkish Counterpart Discuss Karabakh

NC1502204594 Yerevan SNARK in English 1544 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Yerevan, February 15 (SNARK)—Today there was a telephone talking between the Armenia's Foreign Minister Vahan Papazyan and the Turkish head of Foreign Office Hikmet Cetin.

As SNARK was informed at the press-center of Armenia's Foreign Ministry, in the course of the talking the last events of the region were discussed. The same source said that there was an exchange of opinions on possible steps to the Karabakh conflict's settlement. Other details of this talking are not divulged.

Karabakh Units Repulse Attacks in Mardakert Region

LD1502232394 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1947 GMT 15 Feb 94

[By ARMENPRES correspondent Garri Galustyan for TASS]

[Text] Yerevan February 15 TASS—Fighting goes on in the Karabakh front's northern section, sources at the Karabakh Defense Army's headquarters told ARMENPRES.

The main developments are reported in direction of the strategic Omar mountain pass in the north of the Kelbajar region. Karabakh units are fighting for full control in the front's important area.

The Azeri offensive towards the Tonashen settlement of the Mardakert region resumed today to continue the two-day fighting. Karabakh units are repulsing the attacks. There is no information about casualties.

It was relatively calm in all other areas of confrontation this morning.

Defense Minister Receives Visiting British Military Team

NC1502222594 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First Program Network in Armenian 1800 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Armenian Defense Minister Serzh Sargisyan today received a British military delegation headed by General [name indistinct], the British military attache at the British Embassy in Moscow.

The Defense Ministry Press Service reported that the general situation on the Armenian-Azerbaijani front was discussed during the meeting.

The guests wanted to visit army units in Vardenisskiy and Gorisskiy rayons to get acquainted with the daily lives of the fighters of the Armenian Army.

Azerbaijan

Georgian Foreign Minister Meets With Aliyev

NC1502192094 Baku TURAN in English 1806 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Baku (February 15) TURAN—Yesterday Georgian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Aleksandr Chikvaidze and accompanied him persons arrived in Baku.

The meeting of Aleksandr Chikvaidze and Azerbaijani Foreign Minister, Gasan Gasanov is taking place at present.

President's Staff of the Republic reports that today President Aliyev is due to receive Georgian Foreign Minister.

This evening Chikvaidze will leave for Iran. According to Georgian sources, Chikvaidze will discuss the matters concerning delivery of Iranian gas to Georgia through the territory of Azerbaijan.

Some Western sources report that both parties will discuss military-political situation connected with return of Russian troops in Georgia.

[In another report in the same transmission, Baku TURAN in English adds the following: "Today President Geydar Aliyev received Georgian Foreign Minister Aleksandr Chikvaidze and Georgian Minister of Economy Vladimir Kereselidze.

["During the meeting President Aliyev informed the guests about the results of his visit to Turkey.

["A. Chikvaidze said 'we considered it would be useful to meet with Azerbaijani president on our way to Tehran'.

["A. Chikvaidze also said that economic problems of Georgia aggravated the socio-political situation in the country and Georgia counts on the help of its nearest neighbours in order to overcome the economic crisis.

["A. Chikvaidze also handed over to Aliyev the invitation from Eduard Shevardnadze for an official visit to Georgia. Aliyev received the invitation with gratefulness and said that this visit will be of mutual importance for the two countries.

["As Press Center of Azeri president reported in 1993 goods totalling 29.9 million dollars were exported from Azerbaijan to Georgia, and goods totalling 17.2 million dollars were exported from Georgia to Azerbaijan."]

Further on Talks

LD1502193594 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 1600 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] A Georgian state delegation led by Minister of Foreign Affairs Aleksandre Chikvaidze, on its way to the Islamic Republic of Iran for an official visit, made a stopover in Baku, capital of Azerbaijan on 14 February. The leader of the delegation was received by the country's president, Geydar Aliyev.

A meeting between the two countries' foreign ministers, Hasan Hasanov and Aleksandre Chikvaidze, took place at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan. In the course of the two-hour meeting, the ministers discussed a wide range of political and economic issues relating to cooperation between Georgia and Azerbaijan. The treaty on collective security among the CIS member- states and [words indistinct] were given special attention at the meeting. The ministers also discussed issues relating to the opening of the Georgian embassy in Baku and the Azerbaijani embassy in Tbilisi.

A member of the Georgian delegation, Industry Minister Vladimer Kereselidze, visited the Ministry of Light Industry of Azerbaijan, where he met its (?leadership). Issues of mutually beneficial cooperation between the two neighboring countries, prospects for setting up joint enterprises, and possibilities for the delivery of raw materials were discussed.

The Georgian state delegation left Baku for Tehran on the same day.

Fierce Fighting in Kelbadzhar Region

LD1502173694 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1413 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Fierce fighting continued yesterday in the north of Azerbaijan's Kelbadzhar Region for establishing control over the road linking Kelbadzhar and Agdere (Armenian name - Mardakert), the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry announced on Tuesday. The same source reports that Armenians have lost several dozen people and a tank.

In the southern section of the front (Azerbaijan's Fizuli Region) intensive shelling occured on Monday. On the same day, a tank of the Karabakh Army was put out of action.

The Azerbaijani Defense Ministry stated that populated areas of Azerbaijan's Kedabek Region had been shelled. No one was injured.

Interfax has not yet received reports from the Karabakh Defense Army.

Official on Russian Role in Karabakh Conflict

WA1602154194 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1308 GMT 10 Feb 94

["Exclusive" report]

[Text]

Baku's View on Settlement of Armenian-Azeri Conflict

In one of its recent issues Interfax-Exclusive acquainted its readers with the position of the leadership of the self-proclaimed Nagorno-Karabakh Republic on ways to unblock the bloody conflict in Azerbaijan. Today it is the turn of the Azeri side. The state adviser for foreign political affairs of Azerbaijan VAFA GULUZADE talks to the Interfax correspondent in Baku.

IF: The Russian special envoy Vladimir Kazimirov stayed for several days in Azerbaijan. He attempted to achieve progress in the process aimed at the political settlement of the Armenian-Azeri conflict within the framework of the Russian mediation. What does Baku think about the visit?

GULUZADE: As is known, late in November Vladimir Kazimirov was in Baku. He discussed with the Azeri side a Russian plan and took into account all our remarks. Then the head of the Russian mediatory mission was to leave for Yerevan to discuss the plan with the Armenian side. Then his car was fired at from Armenian positions. It was a serious incident which was not settled immediately because the Armenian side refused to apologize.

I believe the current visit by Kazimirov to Yerevan and Baku is the continuation of the November mission.

Russia is the mediator in the conflict and acts accordingly. However, the time that has passed since November was missed since there were fierce battles at the fronts. There were many casualties and there are even now.

I put the responsibility for all these developments on the Armenian side. Azerbaijan is attempting to solve the problem peacefully, through political talks.

IF: Namely?

GULUZADE: This means that Armenia must withdraw its troops from all occupied territories of Azerbaijan. (Yerevan claims that involved in the hostilities are the Nagorno Karabakh self-defense forces, not Armenian troops—"IF"). This may cause the beginning of the talks on the essence of the Armenian-Azeri conflict.

However, the Armenian side want to stay on the occupied territories to settle there and build fortifications. The world public does not know about this in full measure. At the same time, Yerevan deludes the world public opinion claiming that Armenia stands for a peaceful settlement of the conflict and fully shares the schedule of the settlement developed by the CSCE Minsk Group under which Yerevan put its signature.

It took part in the recent meetings of the Minsk Group in Vienna, and I say with full responsibility that the Armenian side disagrees with the schedule.

The signing of the schedule was a diplomatic maneuvering. Armenia has added a letter to the signature in which it puts some conditions. For example, the Armenian side conditions the compliance with the schedule with the guarantee of the Nagorno-Karabakh safety in a way seen by Yerevan.

On the other hand, Armenians say that they understand the notion "side" as the recognition of the Nagorno-Karabakh status. Could it be said that the Armenian delegation signed the Vienna schedule? I believe now the peaceful settlement of the conflict fully depends on the will of the Armenian side.

There is a resolution of the UN Security Council and there are universally acknowledged norms which say that any talks may be conducted only after the occupied territories are liberated. In conditions of the occupation of one-fifth of the Azeri territory, it is out of the question to speak about any peaceful talks, I believe. It is possible to hold a Minsk conference and speak about the status of Nagorno-Karabakh only after the withdrawal of the Armenian troops.

IF: What does the Russian peace plan specify?

GULUZADE: The Russian plan mainly coincides with the CSCE schedule. It has similar demands and a similar schedule for the withdrawal of Armenian troops from the occupied territories. It is premature to speak about it once it is not yet coordinated. (As is known, later the Azeri side turned down Moscow's proposal on cease-fire since February 1 for at least 2-3 weeks and put a condition of the withdrawal of the Armenian troops from Azerbaijan—"IF").

IF: Does the Russian peace plan provide for the deployment of a Russian peacekeeping contingent in the zone of conflict?

GULUZADE: There is much speculation around the problem of the deployment of a Russian or a CSCE peacekeeping force. I believe these forces can be deployed.. First, they must be deployed along the border between Azerbaijan and Armenia because the aggression against Azerbaijan comes from the Armenian territory. Second, such forces could be deployed between the warring sides after Armenia withdraws its occupation troops from the captured Azeri territories.

The question about the peacekeeping force was also discussed in Rome last year, at the meeting of the CSCE foreign ministers. According to the decision taken there, the peacekeeping force may be deployed on the territory of this or that state only on the country's request, which is the manifestation of respect for its Constitution and territorial integrity. Naturally, if we wish, we shall apply to Russia.

IF: The official Baku demands the withdrawal of the Armenian troops from Azerbaijan. Does it mean that they must be pulled out from Nagorno-Karabakh, as well?

GULUZADE: Logically, from the point of view of justice, all Armenian armed forces must be withdrawn fro the territory of Azerbaijan. Nagorno-Karabakh is also part of Azerbaijan.

According to foreign sources, 8,000 Armenian nationals fight on the side of the so-called Karabakh forces against Azerbaijan. I believe it is a matter of complete cease-fire and full withdrawal of Armenian troops from Azerbaijan.

IF: What could be Baku's attitude to the deployment of the Russian forces along the border between Azerbaijan and Iran as CIS external borders?

GULUZADE: I believe it is a matter of the future. For us the border between Azerbaijan and Armenia is the most acute problem. This was mentioned by President Geydar Aliyev during the visit by the commander of the Russian Border Guard troops, General Andrey Nikolayev, to Baku.

As to our borders with Iran... well, Azerbaijan is a sovereign state. It will guard its borders itself. At the same time Azerbaijan is a CIS member-state. Baku may negotiate to what degree CIS can help ensure common interests.

IF: Which is the likelihood of a Moscow meeting between presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan which is a common talk over the past time?

GULUZADE: I believe a relevant political basis should be developed for such a meeting. If Russia acts as a mediator, it should take into account all factors for the conflict to be settled. If so, details could be discussed under Russia's auspices. But, by that period, the essence of the problem should be coordinated; that is, I repeat, the withdrawal of the Armenian troops from Azeri territories.

Azerbaijan poses no obstacles for a peaceful settlement. This is confirmed by many statements made by President Geydar Aliyev. For the peaceful process to start it is necessary that Armenia show a desire to such a settlement and make a statement that it will withdraw all its troops from Azerbaijan. This could be achieved given the goodwill of the Armenian side, and, I would say, the due decisiveness of Russia. I want to emphasize that Russia has levers of pressure on Armenia. The Russian Army is deployed on its territory. It is common knowledge that Yerevan uses the fact for acquiring armaments, ammunition and even uses Russian servicemen in the above conflict.

IF: What is known about the date of the meeting?

GULUZADE: I do not know anything about the date of the meeting. I believe the talks should be an aim in itself. The meeting could take place if the mediator will be able to prepare the necessary basis for it. Azerbaijan has enough of goodwill and constructive approach.

Georgia

Shevardnadze Seeks Peacekeeping Forces in Abkhazia

LD1502185894 Tbilisi First Program Television Network in Georgian 1700 GMT 15 Feb 94

["Excerpt" from interview with Georgian Head of State Eduard Shevardnadze by Russian Independent TV Company correspondent Nona Andiashvili in Tbilisi on 15 February, conducted in Russian—recorded]

[Text] [Andiashvili] The Georgian Government issued a statement in the wake of the events which started on 7 February in Abkhazia. The statement says that although the Georgian government supports a peaceful settlement of the conflict, it will take all necessary measures to protect the Georgian population on the territory occupied by the Abkhaz separatists. Does this mean that the Georgian side is ready to start hostilities against Abkhazia?

[Shevardnadze] First of all, I would like to take this opportunity to say that we expected a more substantive reaction from the relevant Russian authorities, which were well informed about this tragedy. There has not been a single statement, not a single protest, not a single address condemning this.

I do not want Russia's television representatives to feel offended, but the information which was sent to them through official channels was not conveyed to the public.

I think that in this way it will be difficult for us to join efforts to solve the conflict peacefully. It is especially upsetting that all these dramatic events happened after a very successful visit to Georgia by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin.

As for the part of the Georgian government's statement which you mentioned, I think that if we fail to deploy peacekeeping forces in the near future—it does not matter how it happens and what proportions it takes—this will happen spontaneously. We are finding it extremely difficult to restrain people, tens of thousands of people [words indistinct], a great number of weapons on the border in Zugdidi rayon and in other rayons adjacent to Abkhazia.

We are told openly: If you are not able to defend us, we will try to determine our fate ourselves.

I am afraid that everything will happen spontaneously and then it will be too late to speak about a peaceful settlement [words indistinct]]. We are naturally pinning high hopes on a Security Council resolution. A Security Council meeting will probably be held after the 20th. As regards the Security Council, Russia has, I would say, a sensible position there.

In principle, we determined our (?common) attitude during the visit to Tbilisi by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin.

If this issue [sending peacekeepers to Georgia] is decided, then hope for a peaceful settlement remains.

Government Forgoes Gamsakhurdia Postmortem, Allows Reburial

AU1602095494 Tbilisi SVOBODNAYA GRUZIYA in Russian 10 Feb 94 p 4

[INPRINDA news agency report under the rubric "According to Reports From Correspondents and Information Agencies": "Once More About Gamsakhurdia"]

[Text] As the agency's correspondent was informed in the republic's Ministry of Security, the Georgian government has consented to the reburial of the body of ex-president Gamsakhurdia and its removal from western Georgia without there being a forensic examination. Regarding the composition of the delegation from Groznyy [Chechnya] that is dealing with matters concerning the reburial, the Georgian side has officially stated that proceedings have been instigated against his closest associates Avtandil Rtskhiladze and Merab Kiknadze and, therefore, it is suggested that they be excluded from the list of persons accompanying the body of the ex-president; otherwise, they will be arrested.

Estonia

'Peaceful' Protest Held Outside Russian Naval Offices

WS1402212194 Tallinn BNS in English 1928 GMT 14 Feb 94

[Text] Kaliningrad, Russia, Feb 14, BNS—The picket at the Russian Navy headquarters in Tallinn today was "peaceful" and "there were no provocations," Rear Admiral Anatoliy Gavrilov, commander of Russian Navy's Tallinn base, admitted in an interview with BNS.

He added that no extremist slogans targeting Russian military could be heard during the protest action. The organizers of the picket had warned the Tallinn base command of it in advance.

Gavrilov said the pickets, which will be repeated every Monday, are "designed to put pressure" on Russian politics. He linked them with Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev's recent statements.

"Judging by the speeches and the behaviour of the participants, it was clear they gathered in order to reassure themselves, not to express hostility toward us," Gavrilov told BNS.

Government Bill Restructures Paldiski Administration

WS1502173194 Tallinn BNS in English 1616 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Tallinn, Feb 15, BNS—The government passed today a bill on the administration of Paldiski drafted by the Justice Ministry.

Under the bill, the islands of Suur-Pakri and Vaike-Pakri, as well as the Pakri Peninsula, will be transferred to the Padise and the Keila administrative districts, while the town of Paldiski is to be temporarily administered by the town of Keila. Thus, Paldiski may acquire the status of a district of Keila.

The bill terminates the authorities of the Paldiski Town Council and the mayor elected in 1989. The government has the right to restrict entrance into the town until hazardous radioactive substances are removed from it.

The bill stipulates that the special order of Paldiski's administration becomes invalid immediately after the election of new local government bodies in the town.

The government passed the bill to the parliament.

Latvia

Birkavs on 'Partnership for Peace', Russian Ties

BR1502130894 Brussels LE SOIR in French 15 Feb 94 p 2

[Interview with Valdis Birkavs, prime minister of the Republic of Latvia, by Pol Mathil; place and date not given: "On Latvia, 'Partnership For Peace'"]

[Text] [Mathil] With your accession, the three Baltic states are among the first eight countries to adhere to the Partnership for Peace. Do they have a particular reason for being in such a hurry?

[Birkavs] We are not in any more of a hurry than anyone else, but you only need to look at the map to understand. For us, security has its own dynamic, its own timetable, and nothing can be done before its time comes, and nothing after it has passed. I believe that now is the time.

[Mathil] Why precisely now? Have the results of the Russian elections exerted any pressure on the timetable?

[Birkavs] Certainly. After the Russian elections I stated that security was now the number one issue. We are very close neighbors, we are deeply interested in developments inside Russia.

[Mathil] Should we consider that you place yourself within what the Russians term as the "near abroad" where, in the words of Russian Foreign Minister Kozyrev, Moscow has "legitimate interests"?

[Birkavs] Of course not. Admittedly, we are neighbors and I suppose will always remain so. Unfortunately, Mr. Kozyrev said some very muddled things about Russian "interests" in the Baltic states, without ever really explaining what this means.

[Mathil] It is this Monday also that discussions on the withdrawal of Russian soldiers are due to restart in Riga. How many remain in Latvia?

[Birkavs] About 10,000.

[Mathil] You are going to leave a major radar base in Skrunda (150 kilometers west of Riga) in Russian hands for another four years, followed by 18 months to dismantle it. Is it true that you agreed to this under pressure from NATO and the European Union?

[Birkavs] Clinton and Yeltsin set this timetable at their last summit. This compromise will be debated by our parliament. We do not want to adopt too rigid a position with regard to the West, but nothing will be done without parliament's approval.

[Mathil] Why is this base so important to the Russians?

[Birkavs] It is just one aspect of the pressure they are exerting on us. The Russians have three instruments: Their army, the Russian-speaking minority, and economic dependency. The military question is now being settled. The nationality law is being debated by parliament. We must face the consequences of a genuine colonization.

[Mathil] Do you accept dual nationality?

[Birkavs] Never.

[Mathil] There remains economic dependency: The Russian government has just threatened to cut off gas supplies to Latvia for non-payment of its debt.

[Birkavs] This debt does not exist. We signed an accord with GazProm (Russian gas company) which Moscow has unilaterally cancelled.

[Mathil] Is not the general manager of GazProm none other than Victor Chernomyrdin, Russia's present prime minister?

[Birkavs] Yes. He knows that we owe them nothing. They are trying to make gas a political issue. That is how dependency is created, it is not only economic.

[Mathil] Do you believe the 'Partnership For Peace' can help you to overcome this type of difficulty, and free you from various forms of dependency?

[Birkavs] The Partnership is a major step in the right direction, but it is no more than a step, the first step toward a satisfactory security structure. It contains no formal guarantee.

[Mathil] What is your analysis of the situation in Moscow?

[Birkavs] If the Russians really carry out the economic reforms they will have to face a number of very difficult years, but after that their prospects will be favorable. If they do not carry out the reforms, they will also have a number of very difficult years, with no other prospect in view. In other words, in two years time, at the time of the presidential elections, the situation is in any case going to be very tense and a radical and nationalist president could be voted into power.

[Mathil] You are not very optimistic. What to do about Russia?

[Birkavs] Recently, when I attended the economic forum in Davos everyone asked me that same question. Nobody had the answer.

[Mathil] How do you explain that Russia has not yet reacted to the 'Partnership for Peace'? Do you think there is a debate on this subject within the Kremlin?

[Birkavs] Yes, I believe so. When we had to take a decision on this question, we consulted all the political forces in the country. It would be natural for such a debate to take place in the Kremlin.

[Birkavs] What do you think of NATO's ultimatum in Sarajevo? Do you think it sets a precedent? Would you like to see NATO intervene in a similar way in other European conflicts? In the Baltic region for example?

[Birkavs] Faced with a situation as explosive as in the former Yugoslavia, you must adopt a very strong but also a very prudent position. The NATO ultimatum satisfies these criteria. It is a positive step. It is just one means of action. We will see the result.

Latvia's Role in 'Partnership for Peace' Program

LD1502185994 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1700 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Latvian Prime Minister Birkavs told journalists today that Latvia will actively—dependent on financial possibilities—start cooperating within the framework of the NATO Partnership for Peace program. Birkavs comments came following his return from Brussels. On Monday in Brussels, Birkavs confirmed with his signature Latvia's agreement to the new NATO program.

Latvia will initially participate in the formation of a Baltic peacekeeping battalion, arranging its military structures so they correspond with NATO standards. Moreover, Latvia will try to use all the information received from the NATO, as well as taking part in NATO exercises and various educational seminars.

Russian Negotiator on Progress of Pullout Talks

LD1502195994 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1651 GMT 15 Feb 94

[Text] Russian chief negotiator in talks with Latvia Sergey Zotov told INTERFAX that agreement was reached on two of the four papers on Russian pullout at the fresh round of talks, now under way in the resort town of Jurmala outside Riga. Both of them are ready for initialling, he said.

The question is one of the two draft deals on the withdrawal of Russian troops by August 31 and social security nets for servicemen over an interim period. Zotov says this provides for the servicemen's right to privatize their housing before selling it to local residents and to take out or transfer property to their relatives in Latvia and other property guarantees.

The two sides are holding further talks on Russia's radar installation at Skrunda and an agreement on social security safeguards for retired Russian servicemen residing in Latvia.

Moscow and Riga are still wide apart on the amount to be paid for the leasing of the facility.

Russia put forward a new proposal agreeing to pay in fuel exports to Latvia in exchange for the use of the installation, the diplomat said.

Earlier, agreement had been reached that Moscow would continue using its advanced warning radar station in the next four years and take a further 18 months to dismantle it.

On social security safeguards for retired Russian servicemen, Zotov said that differences remained on granting permanent residence to those who retired after Latvia gained independence in August 1991. (The Latvian bureau for monitoring Russian troop withdrawals puts their numbers at about 15,000 - IF)

"Russia will never renege on its demand that all Russian servicemen retiring before January 28, 1992 be granted permanent residency in Latvia even if the whole deal on troop withdrawals has to be thrown out", Zotov said.

The latest round is to end on Thursday but not on Wednesday as planned before.

Negotiations With Russia on Skrunda Radar Continue

WS1602102994 Tallinn BNS in English 0724 GMT 16 Feb 94

[Text] Jurmala, Latvia, Feb 15, BNS—The issue on the rent or compensation Russia would pay Latvia for operating the military radar in Skrunda "is in the stage of discussion," chief Latvian negotiator Martins Virsis told reporters.

Virsis evaded from saying concretely whether Latvia will accept the Russian-proposed rent of 2 million U.S. dollars per year.

Russian chief negotiator Sergey Zotov told reporters today that Russia would be forced to extend the deadline of troop withdrawal if Latvia wanted more than 2 million dollars a year for the radar's operation.

On the one hand, Virsis said, Latvia was aware of Russia's economic problems but, on the other hand, the sum could also be regarded as too small.

In addition, Russia initially wanted to keep 900-member personnel in the station. During the negotiations, Russia agreed to cut the number of military personnel by a third if the civil staff is respectively increased.

Commenting on the dismantling of a newly-built installation in the territory of the Skrunda compound, Virsis said Russia "in principle agreed to pull it down but said it had no money to accomplish the task."

Russia wouldn't mind if Latvia helped it dismantle the installation, Virsis said.

Virsis abstained from predicting on the outcome of the talks.

As reported, Russia proposed Latvia to complete troop withdrawal by the end of August if Latvia allowed it keep the Skrunda radar for four years and dismantle it in 18 months.

The Latvian cabinet is expected to accept the proposal.

Authorities Confiscate Russian General's Passport

MK1602111094 Moscow KOMMERSANT-DAILY in Russian 16 Feb 94 p 14

[Mikhail Lashch report: "The Latvian Administration Harasses a Russian General"]

[Text] Another conflict has occurred in Latvia between a Russian general and the local authorities. The Latvian Citizenship and Immigration Department has confiscated from General Anatoliy Gaponov his USSR passport. Yesterday KOMMERSANT-DAILY learned some details of the incident. So far there has been no reaction from the Russian Defense Ministry.

It is noteworthy that the decision to confiscate the passport from the general was made by Andrejs Rucs, chief of the Vidzemsk district in Riga. Rucs is known for the fact that at the end of January he ordered two Russian generals, Vodopyanov and Taylakov, to be handcuffed and arrested. Their arrest led to the disruption of a regular round of the Russian-Latvian negotiations on the status of the Russian radar station in Skrunda while Russian Defense Minister Pavel Grachev put troops stationed in Latvia on high alert. After that incident the Latvian government ruled to dismiss Rucs from his post while the prosecutor's office opened a criminal case against him. Later on, however, deputies of the local council reinstated Rucs in his post. Apparently, after receiving a vote of confidence, Rucs has launched a harassment campaign against the Russian generals.

Rucs' first step in this direction has been an order to confiscate the passport from Russian General Anatoliy Gaponov. First, the local Latvian authorities invited General Gaponov to vacate his apartment. After the general's representative arrived at the Citizenship and Immigration Department with General Gapanov's passport to obtain documents confirming the legitimacy of the general's presence on Latvian territory, Latvian officials confiscated Gaponov's ID. According to the department leadership, he is simultaneously a private individual (by his passport) and a military serviceman (by his ID), which contradicts Latvian law.

A department employee, who asked not to be identified, said in a conversation with KOMMERSANT-DAILY's correspondent that he has no information on this case: "The question of legality or illegality of confiscating the passport will be decided at the working level." Furthermore, as KOMMERSANT-DAILY's correspondent has learned, the Latvian prosecutor's office is undertaking its own investigation into the incident with the Russian general.

Dmitriy Rogozin, chairman of the Congress of Russian Communities, told KOMMERSANT-DAILY's correspondent that he was not surprised by what has happened: "This is not a precedent but a relapse which will recur again and again. The arrest of Generals Vodopyanov and Taylakov and the seizure of Gaponov's passport is aimed at humiliating Russia and its officials."